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# WHITEHALL;

OR,

# THE DAYS OF CHARLES I.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
GEORGE WOODFALL AND SON,
ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET.

# WHITEHALL;

OR,

# THE DAYS OF CHARLES I.,

AN

HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF WHITEFRIARS.

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"And why may I not then be idle with others? speak my mind freely? If you deny me this liberty, upon these presumptions I will take it: I say again, I will take it. If any man take exceptions, let him turn the buckle of his girdle, I care not. I owe thee nothing, Reader, I look for no favour at thy hands, I am independent, I fear not."

BURTON'S ANATOMIE.

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VOL. III.

LONDON:

JOHN MORTIMER, ADELAIDE STREET.

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# WHITEHALL.

## CHAPTER I.

"Such are the last infirmities of those
Who long have suffered more than mortal woe,
And yet, being mortal still, have no repose
But on the pillow of revenge."—Byron.

Left at liberty within the range of the army's quarters, and backed by the secret good-will of the officers, Ingulph returned to his former labours. He now devised a petition to the Lord General, Fairfax, in favour of a commonwealth, to be signed by each individual man. But the panic infused by the late severity made this a task of difficulty, and as his old coadjutors hung fire, Ingulph was obliged to do the work almost entirely without assistance.

The cantonments of the army were very extensive, and he had frequently to ride to great distances; but his perseverance overcame all obstacles, and he had nearly achieved his purpose, when he happened to return one evening to Ware, rather late. On his way he had to pass a very disagreeable ob-

ject, the body or rather the mummy of a man which had been hung in chains for many years, for a murder committed on the spot. The gibbet hung on the banks of a shallow water, which crossed the road at the base of a very steep hill.

Buried in meditation on his project, Ingulph scarcely noticed his approach to this unhallowed locality, until the downward stoop of his horse compelled him. He glanced forward, without any particular interest, but his eye was caught by observing a somewhat singular horseman halting at the ford below. He was mounted on a large gaunt white horse, and wore a black riding-habit, with a conical hat of extraordinary height; his face was turned away, but it was a fine moonlight, and showed that he had a long grey beard. He seemed looking so intensely at the malefactor's grisly carcass, swinging in its iron network, and listening to its sullen creak, that he took no cognizance of Ingulph's approach, though his horse's tramp was very audible among the loose stones.

At first Ingulph thought that it was a patrol of the army, but as he wore no armour the idea vanished as soon as it rose. Next, he thought it possible it might be a highwayman, but that was improbable in a country so continually scoured by troops. Still the horseman's fixed manner had in it something so singular, that Ingulph laid hand on the pistol in his holsters as he approached. His surprise increased when he found that the stranger still preserved the same attitude: he therefore suddenly reined in his horse, and said in a loud tone, "Good night, com-

panion; and take the ford first, since you are first at it."

"I have no business over the ford, and but one in life," returned a voice which made Ingulph's heart leap, although its accents were even too icily calm.

"Stonehenge!—Master Stonehenge!" said Ingulph, keeping a wary eye on this awful visitor.

"Be not dismayed!—I am not here in my quality of prophet!" replied Stonehenge, turning with an air of lofty dignity; and the moonbeam falling on his face revealed features so haggard and worn, and lighted by an eye so full of insane lustre, that the view was far from diminishing Ingulph's alarm.

"For what then are you here?" he said, in a voice which quavered despite all effort to keep it steady.

"To do you good, nephew," replied Stonehenge, with a lurking cajolery of tone inexpressibly fearful.

"I never did you harm!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"What harm have any of us done, before we are born, and yet what wretched wretches we are made!" said Stonehenge in a strangely mock canting tone. "But our misery is justly deserved, neglecting as we do,—even the holiest of us,—one half of the worship and rites we owe! Two powers divide the universe, and yet we continually provoke the other to vengeance!"

"And you would introduce,—would restore this double worship?" said Ingulph, with a cold shudder.

"Nay, I am not to be caught in that trap!" said the prophet with a terrible smile, or rather an exposure of his teeth, while his eyes shone with unnatural brilliancy. "These are moot points, on

which wise men clap their neighbours up in straw, while others worshipfully heir their wealth, and their pretty wives! But I do say, 'tis strange that yonder carrion should have had an immortal soul, and yet swing rotting there in the sun from day to day, and from year to year! Not that I mistake this moon that is shining for the sun; you cannot say that! But whatever comes of it, these are times when men may think each his own folly, and not be broiled for it, I hope!"

"Doubtless," replied Ingulph soothingly; "I did but speak as one that has heard of your new doctrine, and would be glad to learn its nature."

"'Tis not my doctrine; it is preached to us by all we see, know, feel, remember or foresee!" said Stonehenge, forgetting his caution in his fanaticism or madness. "If thou hast wronged me, I blame thee not; the cycle of things is perpetual, wrong and wrong and wrong, revenge and revenge and revenge!"

"Yet surely this doctrine is not preached by this fair moonlight, by this sweet evening scent of the fields around us?" said Ingulph in a tone of great mildness.

"Nature is insensate; perchance she is happy, at least suffers not," said Stonehenge, gazing on the tranquil landscape with a tinge of sadness which gradually restored the look of sanity to his naturally nobly intellectual countenance.

"But are you come merely to tell me this in kindness?" said Ingulph with gentleness.

"Nay, I come to tell you another matter—in kindness!" said Stonehenge sharply. "Questionless,

you are willing to advance your own interests and projects? They tell us in London, that you labour at great hazards to prevent Cromwell's agreement with the king. You may effect it with none."

"And how?" said Ingulph, after a pause.

"You remember!—I am an astrologer!" replied Stonehenge, in a very rational tone, yet with another of his fearful smiles. "But the stars are not my informants in this. If to-morrow evening, at seven o'clock, you be on the watch at the Water-Poet Taylor's house, one will come who is a messenger, bearing letters from the king to the queen. The contents thereof will stifle this new fit of loyalty in Cromwell's breast,—and you will have all the honour."

"Know you this for certain?" said Ingulph, rapidly revolving the probabilities.

"Here is one from the batch; the rest are there for your discovery," said Stonehenge, producing a letter, superscribed to "My wife," in the king's own hand, and sealed with his signet.

"But wherefore do you not yourself inform the government?" said Ingulph, amazedly receiving the token, but at the same time carefully guarding against any sudden surprisal.

"You take it as gingerly as if he who wrote it had the plague!" said Stonehenge impatiently. "What if I told you I am inclined to do you a service in return,—to wipe off any former injustice may have been between us,—would it make you laugh?"

"You do mine innocence justice then!" said Ingulph pathetically.

"Do you accept the office?" interrupted Stone-

henge, in a tone which effectually froze this flow of feeling. "If it is of no other service, it will give you a pretext to come to London,—and I know you long to be there!"

"I have no great cause!" said Ingulph, with a confusion which he could not altogether hide.

"What, not to see your old friends?" replied Stonehenge, fixing the unmeaning glitter of his eye on Ingulph. "But you are right; the chief charm of these meetings lies in the privacy; and the old way from Holbein's Gate is blocked up now!—But choose your time; I am generally gaping at the stars from sunset to sunrise."

"I will do this office; but I will, if possible, see none of those who were once my friends," said Ingulph mournfully; and Stonehenge, laughing lowly as it were to himself, spurred his nag, and dashed past his nephew. In a moment he had reached the summit of the eminence, where he paused, waved his hand courteously, and disappeared. The tramp of his horse was long audible, mingled with a sound which in the distance resembled a wild Satanic peal of laughter.

Ingulph stood in mute amazement, until the last echo died away; and then, half apprehensive lest the rider should return, he crossed the ford, and put his horse to speed in a contrary direction.

If Stonehenge was mad, there was still so much method in his madness, that, considering his secret means of intelligence, Ingulph doubted not at all the certainty of his revelation. Some lingering feeling of concern for the king might have restrained

him still, but the magnitude of the interest engaged —the ingratitude of suffering his beneficent commander to fall into a snare—determined him to the task.

Cromwell had indeed ordered him to remain in the cantonments, but he had now an ample excuse for disobedience. Yet Stonehenge's jealousy so evidently continued, that he resolved to arrive as late, and stay as short a time as possible in the metropolis. He therefore contrived it so that he did not enter London till late in the afternoon of the following day.

Arriving at Cromwell's house, he learned that he had a large party of officers and parliament men, who had dined with him, and were now engaged in some important discussions. Ingulph's zeal quickened, for he feared that he was arranging some agreement in the king's favour. He sent up a message by the gigantic porter, with his name, purporting that he had news of immediate concern.

Cromwell came to him in the little back chamber, with an appearance of anxiety, which Ingulph hastened as rapidly as possible to relieve, by communicating his errand.

"Foolish lad!—it is impossible; the king has no correspondence but what passes through my hands!" he said, in a vexed tone. "'Tis but a pretext of thine to come to this wicked city, and see how mad we are all going in our several ways."

"Sir, did this letter pass through your hands?" replied Ingulph, handing that which he received from his uncle, the seal of which he had loyally respected.

But Cromwell broke it open instantly, and after glancing down the contents, said musingly, "No.—His majesty is pleased to mention you in it," he added, after a pause, pocketing the epistle. "But we will not make you angry now. We will meet this messenger to-night; but meanwhile come with me, and behold how many heads this hydra hath, which you imagine I can smother in a grasp."

The General led the way into an apartment in which his company was assembled, which Ingulph perceived to be nearly filled with a party of soberly-garbed gentlemen. He found himself an object of general attention, and many looked surprised to behold him introduced with apparent favour by the General, against whom he had so lately been in almost open mutiny.

"Be there any news from the army which it is not unlawful for a plain parliament man to know?" said Sir Harry Vane, with a penetrating glance.

"Nought—but that they are as well-disposed as ever to the general weal, Sir Harry," replied Cromwell, carelessly. "But to resume the discussion we were upon, which methinks is of a mighty concern, and not to be lightly treated;—I would have every man speak to the general enlightenment;—and meanwhile, Master Dethewarre, the claret is as near to you as to me, or I would be your cupbearer."

"You shall have a better office—when I am king," said Vane laughingly.

"But to proceed," continued Cromwell; "I do feel a great enlargement of the heart, and a desire as it were to know what my brethren think on matters,

being all, I am free to confess, more illumined by the Spirit than I can pretend to be, so mixed in carnal operations."

"Let us have your own judgment first, Master Cromwell," said Vane, with a keen glance.

"As to whether a monarchical, an aristocratical, or a democratical government be the best;—'tis a knotty question," said Cromwell cloudily. "But I am apt indeed to conclude—the rather as none of you do object the contrary—that any of them might be good in themselves, or, for us, according as Providence should direct us."

"I have sought the Lord very earnestly and with tears on this point," said Harrison, breaking the short silence which followed this speech. "But when I look abroad, and understand how wonderfully things have been wrought in these latter times, I do almost feel as if the time of the fulfilment were at hand, and that it is treason against the Celestial Majesty to attempt to set up a carnal throne again; for indeed I cannot but think, that if ever the saints are to possess the earth, and the fatness thereof, surely this is the time."

A hum of applause from a small section of the company announced the satisfaction with which the dictum was received; and several began quoting passages of scripture which apparently supported it.

"But still we have not the visible presence; and till it comes, must act as simple men," said Cromwell.

"That monarchy is not desirable in itself is proved, in a spiritual sense, by the eighth verse of

the eighth chapter of the first book of Samuel," said Ireton. "And that it is nowise conducing to the interest of the people of this nation, may be proved by the infinite mischiefs and oppressions we have suffered under it, and by it."

"A commonwealth were then our only refuge," said one whom Ingulph recognised as Colonel Ludlow.

"Saving always Christ's right to the throne of these realms!" said Harrison, vehemently.

"Then, Master Harrison, you would have us erect a republic, and keep the throne standing in it—but vacant—as expecting a comer?" said Cromwell, with an anxious glance around.

"I do opine that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to settle the government of this country without something of monarchy in it," said another speaker; "inasmuch as all our laws and institutions are so closely interwoven with the name and practice of a king, that to dispense with it must indeed breed strange confusions."

"You are a lawyer, Master Whitelocke," said Cromwell coldly. "A king is but a word; put another in its stead, and what does it matter?—The nation for the king—a Tudor for a Stuart—what change did we find but from one tyranny to another?"

"Then there is nothing for it, but to hug our old chains, and let the presbyterians bind us up again, soul and body!" said Sir Harry Vane.

"You are fast, Sir Harry, you are fast!" said Cromwell, with a smile. "We are not come to that yet!—Not only are we now to consider what is desirable,

but what is feasible: but let every man deliver his opinion in order, and we shall see how far the Lord is pleased to make our judgment of a piece."

This was the signal for a general confidence, or at least disclosure; every man was eager to enforce his own views on the momentous topic; and to all Cromwell seemed to listen with an attention approaching to reverence, although he once or twice glanced at Ingulph with a quiet derision which he felt. Ingulph had thought he understood the times, but he stared amazed at the infinite diversity of opinions, wishes, and projects, developed, or rather betrayed, by the eager speakers. Still the predominant feeling was evidently against the king. But time wore on, and Ingulph remarking the increasing darkness, ventured a hint to Cromwell that the affair he knew of required his attention.

"'Tis very true," said Cromwell. "Son Ireton, come with me; we have to settle a matter of discipline, gentlemen, and will return anon. Meanwhile I would remind you that we have more difficulties to deal with than the royal dignity;—there is the royal person."

"Bring him to justice the first!" said Ireton sternly.

"To justice!—as how?" said Cromwell.

"Brutus never wore a brighter dagger than this!" said Harrison, unsheathing his weapon.

"The English people is too great to follow example," said Cromwell, calmly. "Let us set one which the earth may follow—if any—but not an ancient repetition. See you how Master Dethe-

warre's visage kindles?—Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,—I pray you, sir, speak; if there be an oracle in you too, let us hear it."

"Bring the tyrant—if tyrant he be—to an open, just, and legal doom!" exclaimed Ingulph, fired with the mighty thought.

"I do fear me, this youth speaks a greater meaning than his own!" said Cromwell, starting. "For often when I would have besought in the tyrant's favour, my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, and I had not words to pray for him."

"If it come to acceptability above, methinks the lieutenant-general hath a better claim than any king of them all!" said Ludlow jestingly; and Cromwell, laughing like a gleeful schoolboy, snatched up a cushion, threw it at Ludlow, and ran down the stairs. Ludlow immediately caught it, and ran after him with it, throwing it at hazard in the dark; but it apparently missed, by the general's continued laugh of triumph. The party now broke up, and Ingulph and Ireton joined Cromwell in the hall.

## CHAPTER II.

"An unseen hand makes all our moves;
And some are great, and some are small;
Some climb to good, some from good fortune fall;
Some wise men, and some fools we call;
Figures, alas! of speech, for destiny plays us all!"

COWLEY.

"PORDAGE," said Cromwell to his huge porter, "leave muttering defiances to the devil that haunts thee, and get to the mews to borrow three troopers' cloaks and murrions. Say not who needs them, and they will take it 'tis for the guard."

The porter obeyed without uttering a word of acquiescence.

"These fellows are well met," said Cromwell, in a discontented tone, as they left the house. "Hear ye how they rave! If we could discover whether the king is sincere or not, it were a marvellous mercy! So let us to this messenger."

Ireton inquired the meaning of the question, and Ingulph briefly explained it.

"By the endorsement of this letter," said Cromwell, again examining the one received, "it appears that a messenger will come to Taylor's for a saddle, in the skirts of which its comrades are sewed. A

ribald rogue, that I hear hath put me in some of his impudent pasquils."

Pordage returned bearing the required disguises, which the three immediately donned, giving their hats to the porter's care. As they accomplished this transmutation, the clock of St. Margaret's struck the quarter to the appointed time; and after some preliminaries, they hastened to Taylor's house.

It was agreed that the two commanders should wait in the hostelry for a signal from Ingulph, who was to remain outside and watch for the arrival of the messenger. It was a dark night, and the only light was niggardly bestowed from an oil-paper lamp burning over a little wicket which admitted into the stables of the inn. On each side of this was a bench running along the stone wall, for the accommodation of carriers and stable-men; and at the further end Ingulph ensconced himself, completely in the shade. He had shortly after occasion to laud himself on his precautions, for Taylor came to the door, and peered anxiously up and down the street. He began singing some of his usual snatches of ancient ballads, in which he delighted as much as in his own ribaldry.

> "God shield us all, but I must tell
> What to a holy friar befel,
> Gathering herbs by a haunted well!
> Up from the fountain bubbled a sprite"——

He then paused for an instant, and continued—

> "And say you this shoe,
> Quoth the good man true
> To his wife the shrew,
> Belongs to you?
> If not, says she, to the wandering Jew!"

He paused again, and finding no notice taken of his minstrelsy, whistled, and an ostler made his appearance.

"Get Jezabel rubbed down, and give her a hoop of ale for a smart trot," said the Water-Poet. "And tell Huncks when he comes to make no noise, for there are two suspicious-looking roundheads within, that are drinking small beer, as suits them."

He then returned into the inn, humming some words which Ingulph distinguished to be—

> "Nine worthy women once there were;
> So many together may well make you stare,
> But so it was told me—I was not there."

Ingulph was satisfied that the messenger was expected, and it gave him a gratification which was not unalloyed by a sentiment almost of remorse, as he ruminated over the vast consequences of the event. So balanced or rather harassed was his mind, that he felt almost rejoiced when the hour passed, and the messenger did not appear. Then again he reflected on the discredit into which a failure would bring him with the two chieftains, and a fit of impatience succeeded. He had worked himself pretty high in this, when the welcome tramp of a horse sounded on his wearied sense; and in a few instants, a horseman riding on a very beplashed jade, came trotting up to the inn.

Taylor seemed anxiously on the watch, for he instantly darted out and caught the rein.

"Get at once into the stable," he said; "I'll send thee a heart-warmer while they strap the saddle on

the right horse; some day it will be worth to thee a hundred jacobuses."

"Are there rogues about?" said a grating voice in reply, which Ingulph instantly recognised as that of his old friend, the provost-marshal.

"I'll warrant where thou and I are," replied mine host, who was not the man to lose his joke on any occasion. "Welsh roundheads—cheese-toasters;—get thee to the stables."

Huncks complied by giving his nag a brutal kick, while the Water-Poet held the wicket open for him to pass. It closed, and each disappeared in a contrary direction. Ingulph instantly darted out of his concealment, and tapped at the window of the parlour; a signal which he had no occasion to repeat, for his companions almost simultaneously made their appearance.

"Where is he?" said Ireton. "The rogue of a poet is busy burning wine—make haste."

"Follow," replied Ingulph, opening the wicket, which he secured inside when his friends had entered. Then crossing to the stables, the object of their perquisitions appeared unsaddling his nag, while the ostler stood by, holding the fresh horse by the mane with one hand, while with the other he lazily extended a lamp.

"Hillo, my masters, what are ye doing here?" said Cromwell, stepping forward and drawing his sword,—an action imitated by his two coadjutors.

"What the foul fiend is that to your mother's son?" retorted the messenger, but evidently much startled.

"Thou shalt learn, friend Huncks," said Ingulph, clutching him by the collar of the doublet, and after a violent shake, sending him reeling backward.

"We are to search all that go in and out here," said Cromwell, taking the lamp from the ostler; and throwing the light full on the provost's face, he added with a laugh, "but as you look as like an honest man as thy Tyburn face will let thee, we will only search the saddle, and then ride to the devil at thy pleasure."

Ireton meanwhile lifted off the saddle, and the three coadjutors turned into the stable, followed by the provost, loudly protesting his innocence. "I am a parliament servant," he exclaimed, "and have an office under them for a great treason I did the king at Oxford!"

"The liker to do us another in our turn," replied Cromwell; and Ingulph slit open the skirts of the saddle with his dagger, letting only bran out of one, but from the other the expected packet. The provost instantly fell on his knees, and called lustily for mercy.

"'Tis not needed, if you knew not your saddle was a post-bag," said Cromwell, hastily breaking the royal seal on the only letter which bore it. "Take it, and begone!—Nay, 'tis to no great purport!" he continued, glancing down the epistle with increasing darkness of visage. "Court gibes—jests—news of the latest cut in doublets—and the French mode to wear the sleeves double slashed."

He handed the paper over to Ireton, who held it that Ingulph might peruse at the same time. After reading it, Ireton handed over the letter with a sardonic smile, which was met with one full of bitterness and trouble from Cromwell.

"Go on thy way, as I said before; thou art an honest fellow, and thy saddle the lighter," said Cromwell. "Come, brothers, our work is done."

All three quitted the yard, and hastened back to Whitehall.

"Weak and perfidious tyrant! But he has sealed his own destruction," said Cromwell after a short silence. "Forsooth, he is courted alike by both factions, but thinks rather to close with the presbyterians! And the French madam reproaches him with making too large concessions to 'those villains!' But, 'dear heart! rest thou assured that I shall know in due time what to do with the rogues, who instead of a silken garter shall be fitted with a hempen cord!' Look to it, Charles! thine own head is not so firm on thy shoulders as it was an hour hence!"

"But it may be he speaks thus out of his inordinate fondness for that lady, to pacify her," said Ingulph, with some lingering feeling which would not be utterly stifled.

"And so would hang us some fine morning by way of gallantry to his spouse!" said Ireton with a laugh. "Master Cromwell, an it likes you, you may play Wallenstein to this royal cheat; but henceforth the king's game is played out with me."

"There is no longer a king in England!" said Cromwell, stamping on the threshold of his dwelling, which they had now reached; "the monarchy of England died within this hour—sixteen hundred years though it be aged!"

## CHAPTER III.

"Thus storms, let loose,
Do rive the trunks of tallest cedars down."

OTWAY.

THE result of the discovery of the king's secret intentions, coupled with his conviction of the republican fury of the army, at length decided Cromwell on his terrible course. Ingulph returned to the host, commissioned to rekindle the stifled flames into full blaze, and to restore the confidence of the army in its leaders, by assurances that they had abandoned all intentions in favour of the king. Meanwhile Cromwell and Ireton pushed matters to extremity, and forced the parliament to propose to the king conditions which they knew it was impossible for him even to feign to accept. On his obstinate refusal, the vote of non-addresses was passed, and Charles was in fact, though not in words, dethroned.

But the game, though deepening in complexity, was neither lost nor won on either side. The now avowed designs against monarchy and the person of the king, roused the royalists to fury, excited compassion in the great mass of the people, and stirred the presbyterians to resistance, whose beloved covenant stipulated in a solemn manner for the safety of

both. The Scots were exasperated with the obloquy they had acquired by the surrender of their monarch, and with the triumph of their hated rivals, the independents. All parties increased in animosity and desperation, until the second civil war broke out with all the gangrenous humours engendered by the first.

When all parties were fairly set down to the game, it seemed as if Cromwell and his coadjutors held a desperate hand. The majority in parliament, with London itself against them, was only kept down by military awe; and the insurrections which burst out in every direction, and the approaching invasion from Scotland, must speedily remove the shadow of their standards. Blow after blow fell on the independents. The fleet revolted; divisions among themselves heightened the perplexity; Fairfax, either governed by his wife, or by the rigidness of the presbyterian principles, refused to lead against the Scots. But the master genius of the times had arisen, and alone sufficed against all.

Leaving Ireton to govern Fairfax, and the latter to suppress the insurrection in the south, Cromwell rushed into Wales, and subdued the revolt there, ere it had assumed a formidable consistency. Thence he marched with such promptitude to repel the invasion of the Scots, that they scarcely thought he could have reached their Welsh brethren, ere he fell upon them at Preston, and utterly routed them. Pursuing his triumph, he proceeded to Edinburgh, and the divided capital of the enemy received the

English general half as conqueror and half as deliverer.

In the south, the arbitration was not so rapid. Fairfax and Ireton repulsed the royalists in their intended march to London; but they seized in their retreat on the town of Colchester, and defended themselves with such vigour, that the assailants were obliged to form a regular siege. The revolted fleet rode at the mouth of the Thames, and under its countenance a rising in London was daily expected. Many officers commanded in the fleet known to be of great connexion and interest with the city, among whom was the active and intriguing De la Pole.

The army being thus engaged, and the pressure of terror removed, the presbyterian faction revived in all its energy. The object with its statesmen was to avail themselves of their regained power to form an alliance with the king, by which they hoped wholly to discomfit their opponents. The treaty of Newport was set on foot, and the king, at last aware of his danger, showed every inclination to accept the hard conditions offered him.

These news reached Scotland the day of Cromwell's solemn entry into Edinburgh, which was celebrated with all the pomp of a royal reception; the parliament and dignitaries of the city meeting him in their robes of estate. He was lodged in Holyrood; and Ingulph, who had displayed the most reckless valour throughout the campaign, and was now in greater favour than ever, received instructions to be in attendance when the general retired to rest.

Ingulph found him in a narrow and very gloomy little chamber, which he had himself selected; and he dismissed the attendant who was unarming him, as soon as Ingulph made his appearance.

"I will not keep you long from your pillow, if the Scots have provided so marvellous a luxury," said the general, smiling; "and for the reason that I intend you to be in the saddle at daybreak, on your way to a Christian land, where the trees are green, not black."

"I am ready to-night, if it be to your excellency's service," said Ingulph.

"Nay, I am not excellency yet," said Cromwell with a smile; and he added after a moment's pause, with great abruptness, "They tell me that David Rizzio—the paramour of Mary of Scots—was murdered in this chamber."

"An unpleasing recollection, truly, for a sleeping chamber!" replied Ingulph, surveying the chamber with more attention.

"Nay, I mislike it not for that!" said Cromwell, thoughtfully. "Who knows?—after all, this great king, whose blood is so sacred, forsooth, may be but the grandson of an Italian fiddler. But concerning thy journey, and these late advices. Know you what Ireton privily writes me from Colchester siege?"

"I have heard none but the public news," replied Ingulph.

"The cavaliers and presbyters are hastening their agreement, and then we are lost!" said Cromwell in a low tone. "So Ireton writes to me, that sooner than suffer it to be, he will march his army at once

on London, and expel by force these traitorous parliament fellows, that are for giving us up to the Philistines, bound hand and foot."

"And I am to go to him—to bid him do it at once?" exclaimed Ingulph eagerly.

"Nay, but in a more humble and sweet manner—such as to present a gentle remonstrance, the skeleton whereof I will furnish you, in all love and reverence to the House," said Cromwell blandly. "If the army desires meekly to be its own messenger—but I see thou understandest me—in part. But there is more to be done. I must have the poor king's person put in safety. My cousin Hammond is a worthy man, a godly man—but he is foolishly sugared over by the man's sweet words, and is besides a blinded presbyterian. Ireton has sent a little army to the island;—but—I would have him in a safer place."

"If it is in the hands of the army, surely he is safe enough in the Isle of Wight?" said Ingulph, much surprised.

"I will have him in my own!" replied Cromwell hastily; but observing Ingulph's look of inquiry, he continued—"I would not have our cause blackened by a privy assassination, or any such dark matter—and there are among us some who have embraced the accursed Antinomian doctrine of the lawfulness of all things to the chosen ones. I can trust in no man but thee; and thou shalt have ample powers until I return to be his custodian myself."

Aware as Ingulph was of the fervid hatred entertained by many of the sectaries against the person

of the king, this reasoning struck him in a vivid light,—but it was some time ere Cromwell prevailed upon him to accept the painful and dangerous office he proposed. He received his instructions, and the following morning's sunrise beheld him on the road to England.

Dethewarre arrived at Colchester on the very eve of its surrender, and communicated his instructions to Ireton. Meanwhile the parliament and king, aware of their increasing danger, hurried on their treaty. No time was to be lost; all the ancient springs were set to work; the famous Remonstrance was framed; and partly by the persuasions of his officers, partly by the open sedition of the troops, Fairfax consented to lead them to London to deliver it with their armed hands.

The Remonstrance was the first document which openly avowed an intention of altering the form of government, and of bringing the king to a personal judgment. The seizure of his person was now to be accomplished; and, as a preliminary, a large body of troops was dispatched to the Isle of Wight, to overawe both the governor and the people of the island, who were suspected of strong leanings to the king.

As if fate were bent on making him a chief instrument in the sovereign's ruin, Ingulph's reluctance to the part assigned him was overcome by intelligence that De la Pole had attempted Charles's rescue, and though foiled, was supposed to be still hovering, in a light ship which he commanded, about the island, to renew his attempt on any opportunity. Ingulph

hesitated no longer; and with a small but determined body of volunteers, started on his ill-omened enterprize.

A vessel of war, well-armed, awaited him at Southampton; and embarking, they sailed, but were for some time baffled by an adverse wind. It became favourable, however, though still very violent, on turning into the Solent. Ingulph determined to land at Cowes, and to send the vessel round to Yarmouth, whence the transit to their destination was short, as well to spare the king the fatigue of a sea voyage as to avoid any danger of rescue.

Seated amid the shrouds at the prow of the vessel, the winds whistling, roaring, and flapping among rigging and sails, the waves mountainously rolling and foaming to their summits, the sky black, riven, and distracted, Ingulph felt a strange satisfaction, as if his soul found sympathy in those blind and violent operations of nature, as if she too yielded to some irresistible and unreasoning destiny.

Yet milder and more relenting fancies would assail him; he remembered his childhood's awe at the very name of king,—the glory of majesty and power in which he first beheld the sovereign whom he was about to lead away a captive—perhaps to death—dethroned and helpless in the midst of three great kingdoms, once his own. Sometimes he could almost have imagined that he had fallen asleep in some of his old visions in the castle of De la Pole; and would awake anon to the old familiar summons of Adam Rising. But the dream of childhood cannot forestal the sufferings which only manhood can

feel, and when Ingulph passed through all he had endured, in the intensity of his recollections, the milder feeling faded away.

The beautiful shores of the Isle of Wight shortly came in view, and they rushed into Cowes with their impelling wind. Here Ingulph learned the important news, that, driven by their fears, the presbyterians had determined to conclude their bargain with the king. He hastened on to Newport.

Charles had been suffered to resume something of the state and service of a court, and Newport was crowded with his attendants and those of several great lords, his adherents, who had been allowed to wait on him. But the only fear of resistance to Ingulph's mission was from the governor, who had, however, he found, very judiciously retired to Carisbrook.

The king lodged at a gentleman's house in the market-place, and thither Ingulph instantly repaired with his dragoons. The agitators of the great force assembled around Carisbrook at the same time received notice of what was to be done. Ingulph posted his troops all round the house and gardens, to the astonishment of the few persons who beheld him; and then proceeded alone to the gates. There he was met by the Duke of Richmond, sent from the king to know his purpose.

Ingulph replied that he would only communicate it to the king himself; and after several messages were interchanged without result, an order came to admit the military visitant.

Ingulph's countenance remained unchanged as he mounted the stairs; yet something of the antique awe which the presence of sovereignty was wont to inspire in all men, came over him, mingled with a multitude of contending emotions. But when the door opened, and he beheld the king standing in the midst of his few attendants; when he noted the change in his appearance, his long fair hair grizzled over, the natural melancholy of his countenance deepened into an expression of broken-heartedness; his neglected and even sordid dress; Ingulph's heart died away in his breast.

"Well, sir, you see the king," said Charles, gazing at the visitor with keen anxiety. "What is your business with him, or—office perchance? Are you so new a grandee as to be surprised to see a king without a crown on his head, like one in Bartlemy gingerbread?"

"I have orders—to convey your majesty forthwith from Newport," replied Ingulph, uncovering—a homage which the king acknowledged with a slight bend, and a look of extreme surprise.

"Whither, I pray you? To Carisbrook?" he said, with a troubled glance among his attendants, who stared in dumb amazement.

"Sire, no," replied Ingulph.

"Whither then?" returned Charles hastily.

"Out of the Isle of Wight; but whither I am not to communicate," replied Ingulph, remembering the dreary fame and locality of Hurst Castle, to which he was to convey the king.

"I pray, sir, by your favour, let me see your orders," returned Charles. "Or do you bring them like Master Joyce, in your pistols?"

"Your majesty will be pleased to excuse me," said Ingulph, respectfully but firmly.

"You speak not with that fierceness king-catchers should have," said Charles. "Come forth, I pray you, to the light, for the dusk shadow gives you the aspect of a crape-masked assassin!"

"I am no assassin, sire," replied Ingulph, stepping reluctantly forward; and throwing back the dark masses of his hair, his pale and quivering countenance was very visible.

"The times are changed since I first saw that face of yours, Master Dethewarre!" said Charles mournfully. "Howbeit, let it go with the rest; I say it not to reproach you, for you at least have not had benefits only to revenge on me. But I would fain know whether your orders or instructions are from parliament or the general of the army?"

"From neither," replied Ingulph.

"I guess well, you are deputy from the new Venetian council of darkness, then!" said the king with asperity. "But surely one who has eaten of my bread—one whose features are stamped with those lineaments—cannot lend himself to the foul, secret, and sacrilegious murther of his native prince?"

"Your majesty need not fear it, while in my custody,—my life answers for the king's," replied Ingulph.

"Except in that way, I know not what I should fear," said Charles more cheerfully; "and since I

must needs obey your masters, I am glad they have sent me no worse jailer."

Ingulph bowed, and the Duke of Richmond, in a voice broken by sobs, demanded permission to accompany the king. But Ingulph's instructions were positive; none but the king's personal servants were to be allowed to follow him. Then hastily retiring, he left the afflicted courtiers to their lamentations and farewells, while he made the necessary preparations for the journey.

In a few hours the cavalcade reached the place of embarkation, and Charles went on board with his attendants and capturers. Ingulph purposely kept himself at a distance; but once on board, it was not possible, for the king was now exceedingly anxious to know whither he was going. As it could no longer answer any purpose to withhold the information, Ingulph informed him.

"To Hurst Castle!" exclaimed the unhappy king with a visible shudder. "'Tis the worst in England! and perchance for that reason the fittest for what is to be done in it."

"If those who sent me needed a butcher or a bravo, I know not what in me should have prompted them to their choice," said Ingulph, moved with the dismal ideas which he saw possessed the king's mind.

"That they have chosen you is perchance but argument that they have darker means at work, which must be varnished with fair shows," said Charles, sternly. "Who can assure me what nooks and crannies may be in the antique ruin we go to; the

deaf sea only to listen, the blind waves only to see! Perchance, like my ancestor, Richard the Second, my doom is planned of so subtle a horror that humanity cannot suspect it. But in thy hands, my God! do I put my life, and all that is mine; and do not hope, young man, to cement a durable edifice of fortune with your sovereign's blood!"

"Do I look like an assassin, sire?" exclaimed Ingulph, suddenly turning from the respectful side-glance which he was keeping on the sea; and Charles looked at him so long and intently that he grew somewhat confused, though unwilling to betray the feeling by shunning his observation.

"Certes, no," replied Charles, in a softened tone; "though a soldier you may hear it without offence; you are like a lady who, in my father's court, was not held the least fair—one too of your blood, if in truth you do not disavow that loyal De la Pole lineage which you have been even too eager to claim."

Ingulph bit his lip, and coloured darkly, but was silent, and there was a long pause.

"Poor De la Pole!" said the king at last. "Be not troubled that I love him, and for his sake would cheerfully welcome back his brother to duty. Has your vessel a consort?" he concluded abruptly.

The king was looking to the west as he spoke, where the waves were running with the most gorgeous hues against the line of the setting sun; and in the distance a barque with all its canvass spread was visible crossing the light. Ingulph knew that no vessel of the parliament was in that narrow sea; but discerning that the galleon, to whomever it be-

longed, could not pretend to cope in force with his own, he replied in the negative.

The continued anxiety with which the king and his attendants watched the vessel, convinced Ingulph that they either suspected or recognised it to be De la Pole's. But the galleon itself seemed to take alarm at the apparition of the powerful vessel which carried the prisoner, and tacked away from them, against the wind, with most suspicious diligence. Still it continued during the whole transit visible, like a swallow on the waves, and so intently was it observed by the king, that he took little notice of their approach to Hurst, until the distant rumble of a signal gun was heard, and the castle appeared looming out of the white sea-mist.

It was a dark granite pile, occupying the extremity of a narrow peninsula which reached to the mainland; and, indeed, well fitted for a deed of darkness and horror it seemed. Even Ingulph was alarmed when he surveyed the dismal aspect of the fortress, with its narrow loop-windows, and high battlements set with culverins and sakers. The sea rolled with a continual roar up the steep and shingly beach, which it strewed with black weeds; and the winds seemed howling in contention with it as they rushed over the towers, whirling the white fog around in fantastic and spectral forms.

## CHAPTER IV.

"When the sun sets, shadows that showed at noon
But small, appear most long and terrible;
So when we think fate hovers o'er our heads,
Our apprehensions shoot beyond all bounds:
Owls, ravens, crickets, seem the watch of death."

LEE'S ŒDIPUS.

THE captain of the place came out to meet them, with a surly and brutal air, which matched well with his abode, coarsely garbed, and wielding a partizan as if he expected to encounter an enemy. Ingulph's surprise was great when he recognized in this bravo, Huncks, the provost!

"So, your majesty has come at last, now that we have well-nigh strained our eyes out looking for you seaward," said the worthy captain, with great insolence of manner, and keeping his hat on.

"Stand you covered in this presence?" said Ingulph, with a sudden kindling of disgust; and seizing the captain's hat by its rusty feather, he tossed it off on the sands, and the violent wind instantly rushed on with it into the surge.

"I thank you, Master Dethewarre," said Charles, with unusual warmth; the captain glared fiercely, but probably recollecting the intercepted letter, only muttered, "I beg his majesty's mighty pardon, but

methinks the weather is too cold to stand on nice ceremonies," and he plunged after his hat into the tide. Shaking his watery plume, and with his boots foamy to the knees, the provost returned, and sullenly led the way to his keep.

Entering at a narrow gateway, they ascended to the apartments prepared for the king. It was a range of low, dark chambers, very scantily illuminated by narrow apertures in the walls, the boom of the sea sounding immediately below. There was little furniture, and of a coarse description, and a charcoal fire burned low on the bare hearth.

"This is not Whitehall," said Charles, after a long and dismal survey. "Yet a man may die here as well as elsewhere. But how is this, captain? Have your masters so far consulted my tastes as to hang these prison vaults with pictures?"

"There is one; it came from London with the other garniture, an't please," replied Huncks sullenly, tossing the light of the pitch-torch which he carried towards a large canvass in an ebony frame. Charles glanced up, and suddenly grew very pale.

"'Tis the damp air masters me," said he, seating himself faintly in a chair which one of his attendants hastened to bring. "And yet, I do marvel wherefore they have sent this portrait hither!"

Ingulph glanced at the picture with some interest, and as Huncks pertinaciously held the torch up to it, though with little of the expression of a connoisseur, he was startled to recognize the portrait of the Lady Editha De la Pole, which he had formerly noticed in the king's gallery at Whitehall.

"Do *you* know why it has been brought hither?" said the king, with a piercing glance at Ingulph. "And now, indeed, you look very like her!—'Tis the lady of whom I spoke erewhile—a famous beauty—in my father's court."

"To my knowledge, I have seen it but once before," said Ingulph mournfully, for the events of that night rushed back upon his memory. "But I have not the vanity to think I do any way favour so fair a lady."

"I have ever thought so; from the first moment I saw you—a boy—at De la Pole Castle," said Charles, in a very troubled tone. "But I do need rest; I pray you, leave me."

Ingulph thankfully complied, and withdrew, relieving both himself and his prisoner by his departure.

His first business was to examine on what degree of security he could rely in the custody of his royal prisoner. The castle, he found, was more formidable in appearance than in reality. Most of the guns were useless, with rust and sea-damp, but he caused several new pieces to be landed from the ship, which remained in the offing, as an additional security. The garrison consisted only of some dozen ruffianly fellows, probably at the governor's devotion, and in whom he therefore resolved to place no confidence. In all the points of trust he forthwith placed his own troops, a proceeding which seemed to be very disagreeable to the official, but he troubled himself little on that score. Whether he considered this man in his old light of royalist, or in his new one of

renegade, he seemed only doubtfully dangerous; and when he remembered the hatred against the king's person cherished by many leaders of the army,—the fanatic fury which possessed the lower ranks, the mercenary character of the captain, the seclusion of the place,—dark fancies glided irresistibly into his mind.

The issue of the military advance on London was unknown and very doubtful; even if entirely successful, was it probable that the leaders of the army would dare to entertain the stupendous project of bringing the king to an open trial in the midst of three nations, against whose declared masses they formed so small an aggregate? If not,—to be rid of the king was so naturally a part of their policy,—that although Ingulph would not imagine that either Cromwell or Ireton would join in so atrocious a proceeding, a vague but profound dread seized him that some project of the kind might be entertained.

Several days, however, passed without any disturbance, and during that period Ingulph awaited news from London, and devoted himself as much as possible to lightening the king's dejection. He permitted him to walk when he pleased, along the little peninsula, of course well guarded, and accompanied by himself. The natural reserve and austerity of Charles's manners had returned, increased by the irritation of his sufferings, and the intense anxiety under which he obviously laboured. He rarely spoke to Ingulph, and when he did speak, it was on subjects probably as remote as possible from the dominant thoughts in both their minds.

The beauty of the sea views, with the bold Hampshire coast stretching in one direction, that of the Isle of Wight in another, the broad sea expanding in the sunshine as far as the eye could reach in a third, formed panoramas of great magnificence and interest. Ingulph noticed that the king often paused and gazed earnestly whenever a sail appeared in sight; with what thoughts he could readily conjecture, and which the king's efforts to conceal rendered more affecting.

Returning from one of these excursions, Ingulph learned some news which increased his growing impatience and apprehensions in his charge. He usually left Joyce to command in the castle during his absence, to the great wrath of the castellain, who yet knew not how to resist. But Joyce now mentioned that the governor had been out at sea for several hours, in his boat, daily, under pretext of procuring some fish for the king's dinner; and always returned without any, and vociferously cursing his ill luck. Without some more definite cause of suspicion, however, Ingulph felt that to take any open step would be needlessly to arouse fears or hopes which were likely to be equally futile.

On pretence of his former rudeness to the king, Ingulph had forbidden the captain to enter the royal presence; but on some pretext or another he frequently slighted this prohibition. Meanwhile news arrived from London. The parliament had at first preserved an attitude of bold defiance, voted for peace with the king, and that the seizure of his person was against their will, and an act of high treason.

But Pride's purge was administered, and the army were now absolute masters. The council of officers sent word to Ingulph to redouble his precautions, in the guard of his royal prisoner.

At the same time Ingulph's suspicions that some false play was intended revived. Joyce informed his commander that the fishermen who frequented the castle almost invariably came when he was absent, in attendance on the king's morning walks. To ascertain the good faith of these visitants, became at length a matter of anxiety with Ingulph, and he determined to test it by a manœuvre. One day when he had proceeded some distance with the royal party, he feigned to recollect some order which he ought to have given, made his excuses, and rapidly returned to the castle. Joyce met him by preconcert, and with news that the usual fishermen had arrived, and that Huncks was on the shore with them, apparently engaged in chaffering for their scaly merchandise.

Ingulph hastened to the beach, but from its exposed situation he was seen before he could arrive; and the fishermen took to their boat with a precipitation which bore no evidence to the innocence of their intentions. The figure of one of these, even the glimpse of his features which he caught in the distance, persuaded Ingulph that it was Lord De la Pole. He advanced rapidly on the captain, and found him apparently trying the weight of a great cod in his hand, whistling, but very confusedly.

Ingulph made no secret of his suspicions; and he accosted the captain so roughly and abruptly that

for some moments he could not shape an answer. With great dexterity Ingulph accused him so flatly of a conspiracy with De la Pole, that, imagining all was discovered, the provost confessed that he had promised him to aid in attempting the king's liberation. De la Pole was to be in waiting, if he could obtain Charles's consent, with his boat under the tower in which the king was confined. By means of a ladder of rope Charles was to descend from his window; but Huncks swore with many oaths that he had intended to be in ambush, and shoot the king as he descended, having been assured of a large reward to effect his destruction.

Disbelieving this story as he did in great measure, Ingulph thought it was an opportunity to put the king on his guard against the treacherous lures which more than any direct attempts he dreaded. He ordered Huncks to be taken to his presence, under a guard, and there compelled him to repeat his confession. Huncks, in terror of his life, dared not retract; but he positively refused to divulge who were the instigators of his treacherous plot, only declaring that the council of officers knew nothing about it.

The probability of his falling into such a snare immediately struck the king, and convinced him at all events of Ingulph's good faith, though his suspicions increased of the ultimate measures resolved by the grandees of the army against him. He thanked the young commander with as much warmth as his stately and reserved nature permitted; and demanded that Huncks should be sent to London, with a complaint of his nefarious conduct.

As a means of warning the council, if they entertained such perfidious and cruel projects, that he would not suffer their execution, Ingulph consented, and the provost took his departure in chains. To guard against any worse attempts, he then removed his lodgings to a suite of apartments below the king's, extremely desolate and damp, but which commanded all the means of access to him from the interior.

One night, shortly after this occurrence, Ingulph retired to rest, or rather to another kind of restlessness, his anxieties being always prolonged and often fearfully exaggerated in dreams. His chamber was over the drawbridge by which the castle was entered from the mainland, but the sea beat incessantly against one of the walls. It was perhaps the murmur of the water which influenced his imagination in a singular dream, shortly after he had retired to rest. He thought that his chamber was full of persons engaged in a muttering consultation how to effect the king's murder. All the fears with which his waking fancy was haunted, took the voices of various speakers, and among the rest was Stonehenge busily urging that they should throw the king from the battlements into the sea.

While this point was discussing, recollections of the scene in the gallery at Whitehall glided in. The lady of the picture seemed to kneel at Ingulph's couch, and in passionate silence to abjure his interposition. He thought that he sprang up to seize his sword, while the murderers rushed with hideous uproar to the king's chamber! And in truth he found himself sitting upright in bed, bathed in a cold dew;

but the sound which had disturbed him had a real existence. He heard the drawbridge go creaking down, and the clatter of horses' hoofs on it was distinctly audible.

Although the faithful Joyce was left on guard, Ingulph's immediate idea was that the castle was betrayed, and that instead of the prisoner's murderers, his own were approaching. Resolving to sell his life as dearly as might be, he grasped both sword and pistols, and rushed to the door. But ere he could arrive, Joyce's cheerly voice met his ear, the door flew open, and he appeared demurely lighting in a weather-stained traveller, whom Ingulph instantly recognised as Colonel Harrison.

"I marvel you sleep not in armour in such a charge!" said Harrison, entering. "But I am come to relieve you of it, for all I did earnestly ask of the Lord that he would rather set me on any other work to his glory; but beggars cannot be choosers, and here I am, dog-weary."

Ingulph's countenance exhibited no sign of welcome, but Harrison troubled himself in no degree on that score. He proceeded to take off his riding habiliments, and boots, with all the air of a master returned from a short absence; a process in which Joyce assisted, though with manifest sulkiness, and many a querent glance at his young commander. But Ingulph's thoughts were occupied in considering on what errand this gloomiest and most relentless of the fanatics had arrived to supersede him. He also apprehended in what light the midnight disturbance would appear to the king, if he noticed it;

and altogether was too much troubled on greater matters to heed the assumption of his visitor.

"I have been wanting in no diligence that might become an honest man in mine office, Master Harrison," he said, after a pause. "But your coming is a satisfaction so out of hope, that I would fain know what cause has brought you?"

"The cause of the Lord, verily, since He hath owned it against all enemies, backsliders, and lookers back on Sodom!" replied Harrison with a suspicious glance. "But pray you, give me to eat, for until the day-spring comes, man cannot altogether subsist on the spiritual manna."

Ingulph desired Joyce to send up the contents of his larder, but his further questioning was interrupted by the Colonel falling on his knees, and uttering a long prayer of thanksgiving on his safe arrival. Even the entry of the viands did not cut short this effusion, until the fountain itself ran dry.

"You have ridden far assuredly to get so good an appetite," said Ingulph, as soon as the rage of hunger was somewhat appeased in his guest. "But you have yet to tell me the wherefore of your hasty travel, and what are the news with us in London."

"With *us!*" repeated Harrison, with a somewhat sarcastic emphasis. "'Tis like,—yet I know not if such be of pleasant savour in thy nostrils, to prove the utter confounding of the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Perizzite! All have been equally astounded, and the Philistines have lost all hope in the sword and chariot and steed that snuffs the battle from afar, and says Aha!—Yea, even the weakness of some

vessels has proved a strength, and the reluctancy of others to advance has only pushed them on the farther and faster."

"But what is your errand from Israel into Canaan? —our grapes are of no unusual size, at least," said Ingulph, looking round the bare walls and thence at the military saint.

"The blood of the saints splashes up to the heavens for vengeance!" said Harrison enthusiastically. "The destruction of this monstrous criminal is determined, were it from this hand alone!"

"By your leave, I am answerable for the king's safety," said Ingulph; "and no man shall endanger it, but with his own."

"By your leave, you are discharged from the trust, and ordered instantly to betake yourself to head-quarters in London!" retorted Harrison, producing a letter from Cromwell, requiring him to resign the custody of the king to the bearer, and hasten to him at Whitehall.

"'Tis so written here!" said Ingulph, much agitated. "But, Colonel Harrison, I am put in this office by resolution of the army, not by the lieutenant-general."

"You are then won over by the man's cajoleries, as Master Huncks feelingly advertises us!" said Harrison, bitterly. "Else wherefore do you wrestle in the dark with angels, yea, stand in the chariot-way of his coming whose wheels are clothed in thunder?"

The tinkle of the little silver bell with which the

king usually summoned his attendant, was now heard.

"Some such visible manifestation—nay, scarcely that—shall convince me of the righteousness of any secret plot against my prisoner's life!" said Ingulph, searching what effect this intimation might have on the Millenarian.

Harrison laughed in a loud discordant manner, as he replied. "Deem you we dare not bring the crowned malefactor to an open justice? I will tell you that I am here to no other purpose but to bring this brazen idol into the heart of his kingdoms, there to answer the charge of the good but despoiled people of England."

This communication was some relief to Ingulph's anxiety; but by this time the colonel was tired of answering questions, and betook himself to his host's bed as naturally as if it had been made for him. He was soon fast asleep, but Ingulph, not at all tempted by the prospect of such a bedfellow, sat down by the fire, and spent the time in melancholy rumination. The continued howl and whistle of the winds, with the surfy murmur of the sea, bore dismal burden to his meditations, until a timid tap at the door which communicated with the king's suite startled him from his reverie. He opened the door, which was bolted, and admitted Master Herbert, one of the king's attendants.

The face of this gentleman exhibited evident signs of consternation; and he informed Ingulph, that his majesty, having been much disturbed by the

noise in the night, desired to know the cause. Aware that he must soon learn, Ingulph replied with feigned indifference, that it was Colonel Harrison, on some business from the army. Herbert retired with this answer, and in a short time made his re-appearance with the king's request to see Master Dethewarre at breakfast.

Ingulph complied, and found his royal prisoner pallid and exhausted, as if after a sleepless night, with his repast untasted before him. His eyes were instantly fixed on his custodian, with an expression of piercing anxiety.

"We had late visitors last night?" said Charles with forced composure. "As I imagine they are not without some intention of paying their respects to us in our state, we would fain know who they are, and what is their business?"

"Colonel Harrison, to relieve me of my charge, sire," said Ingulph.

"Did he come on his pale horse, like Death in Revelations?" said Charles, with a ghastly smile. "No, Master Dethewarre, you cannot pretend to be ignorant of it; this is the man who intended to assassinate me during the late treaty, and is now sent hither to execute his fell heart's cruelty; but think not that heaven or man will ever acquit you of this sacrilegious murther, for that you do but give the door-key to the murderer!"

"Your majesty wholly mistakes," said Ingulph with great emotion; "the colonel brings orders to escort you to Windsor Castle."

"To Windsor Castle!—mine own pleasant and

right royal home!—It is impossible," replied Charles, with a momentary flash of joy. "No, no, they dare not, they dare not, show to my people their sovereign in chains!—Tell me the worst, good youth!—I trust in God, but I would not be surprised."

"Undoubtedly, sire, you are to go to Windsor; which may be believed, for 'tis in contemplation to bring you to the bar as a common criminal," said Ingulph, aware that no future evil could be of so much terror as the present one which the king apprehended.

"'Tis enough; the falsehood is apparent; I am to be murdered here, and you have but amused me until the knife was sharpened!" said Charles, rising and hurriedly pacing the chamber. "Ha, a poet, and devise no fable more probable than that the King of England, the descendant of a hundred kings, beloved by the majority of his people, in the very centre and heart of his empire, should be brought to the bar like a common pickpocket!—Go to!—Who shall judge the king? Where are my peers assembled, with my only superior, the Eternal Majesty itself, for assessor? Go to! 'Tis thou art my murderer! And therefore do I now perceive why that mask, thy visage, resembles so nearly the hapless lady whom my youth loved—whom the crimes of others and my folly betrayed!"

Ingulph was powerfully affected during this indignant burst; but the last words, which seemed to reproach him with his illegitimate birth, restored him to composure. He answered coldly, that the king wronged him, and was about to retire, when

Charles suddenly darted forward and caught him by the hilt of his sword.

"Stay! I do not mean to draw it," he said hurriedly. "All I ask of you is that you will obtain it shall be done without any unnecessary cruelty, and not as when they thrust the red hot irons into Edward's bowels; but it deceived no one, and brought down a curse for ages on the land!"

Ingulph stood for a moment in silent horror, while Herbert wept aloud.

"That was royal vengeance,—you have only to dread a people's justice," he said at last faintly.

"Have you forgotten Huncks's plot?" returned Charles. "And dare you say there is aught of treachery and cruelty not to be dreaded from those who planned it?"

"I cannot—I do not!" said Ingulph, after a long pause of profound rumination. "And in proof, I will not relinquish the custody of your royal person —not leave you—until you are safe at Windsor."

"Do you swear it, Ingulph?" returned the king.

"Yes, by all my wrongs!—'tis the Styx I swear by," replied Ingulph gloomily, and Charles embraced him with a warmth approaching to tenderness. Renewing his protestation with a fervour which his young heart could not but feel at this extraordinary effusion on the part of the usually austere monarch, Ingulph withdrew to announce his determination, promising to return with the result.

## CHAPTER V.

"You feast, I fear, like Damocles!
If you your eyes should upward move,—
But you, I fear, think nothing is above,—
You would perceive by what a little thread
The sword is hanging o'er your head."

COWLEY.

DETHEWARRE found Colonel Harrison still asleep, and patiently waited during several mortal hours, until he was at last pleased to awake. His first measures opened a way to the explanation, for he began giving orders to Joyce and the soldiers as if he were lord paramount.

"Your pardon, colonel, but I have already given directions in all matters relating to the garrison," he said, demurely. "Therefore, Joyce, you need not trouble yourself to set sentinels on the weather-cock, which, I presume, Master Harrison will next ordain."

"You have been closeted with the man upstairs to some purpose!" said Harrison, with a sneer. "But mean you to say, that you disobey the orders sent you by your commanding officer?"

"I mean to say, colonel, that having received my instructions from another authority, I will surrender the king's person to none but it," replied Ingulph.

"Prithee, what authority?" said the millenarian, with sudden attention, but very fiercely.

"What I denied to his Majesty's request, I shall scarcely grant to your command," returned Ingulph, calmly.

"Have a care, Master Dethewarre, I have my own and Pierrepoint's regiment on the other side of yon strip of land!" returned Harrison.

"But you are yourself on this side," said Ingulph; and Joyce, who stood by, joyously snapped his fingers.

"Verily, I wish I had brought them with me when I came," said Harrison, much amazed.

"Verily, I doubted to let in those few who came with you, Master Colonel," said Joyce. "The old gate will stand a bang or two, and we have two good culverins over it; and the strip of land is dangerous travelling for ordnance, when only four thin fellows can come abreast on it."

"You are, then, resolved to betray the Lord and all his saints, and turn cavalier?" exclaimed Harrison. "You openly and mutinously refuse to obey your orders?"

"Not so; but no other man shall obey them in my stead," replied Ingulph. "I will bring the king to Windsor, peacefully, if I am allowed; but sooner than any shall take him from my care, I will make this castle good to the last stone; and then embark with him, and take him to London by the waters."

In vain did Harrison attempt to move him from this determination with alternate threats and entreaties. Ingulph's suspicions were only strength-

ened by his obstinate efforts, and at last Harrison desisted in pure despair. He remained two days in the castle, under pretence of resting from his fatigue; but finding himself closely watched, he departed in high dudgeon, promising that he would send him orders from London which he would not despise.

The confidence and even affection which the king conceived for Dethewarre on this triumphant result were great, though his habitual caution or reserve allowed him but few expressions of either. Believing that the real intention was to murder him, and that it was thus foiled, he seemed to apprehend no open danger, and earnestly pressed Ingulph to take advantage of the feigned desire for his transmission to Windsor, to escort him thither, ere Harrison could return armed with ampler powers. Ingulph himself, with something of the divine sentiment which moves us to cherish what we have benefited, imagined it the sole extrication from his many contending passions and perplexities. The influence which he felt the fallen sovereign's presence had produced in himself, made him almost share his confidence in the powerlessness of his enemies to proceed in the manner they had declared to intend.

The abstract notion, sublime in itself, of bringing a sovereign who had misused his power to the same justice as a meaner criminal, took another aspect when the individual man, on whom the punishment was to fall, stood before him. His patience, dignity, and sufferings under so vast a load of misfortune, affected Ingulph more than he dared avow to himself. Vague thoughts that his beloved republic

might be established by removing the crown from the head, not the head from the crown, began to float in his visions. They set forward to London, but the very circumstances which seemed to encourage the king's hopes were perhaps the most fatal to them. The miserable circumstances in which their sovereign was now placed, had mollified the hearts of the people towards him; which, with the general dislike of the military usurpation, and curiosity, collected great masses to see the king on his progress. The mayors and corporations of the great towns ventured to receive him with royal honours, and the king's cheerfulness and hopes hourly increased.

The first chill awaited the monarch on the road to Farnham, where they were met by Harrison with a little army. Contrary to his general custom, Harrison was in a very showy dress, insomuch that he attracted the king's attention. He inquired of Dethewarre who he was, and seemed surprised when he heard; and continued looking so earnestly at Harrison, that he retired among his troopers in some confusion.

To ascertain his sentiments with regard to himself, Ingulph rode up to him, and saluting him with an air of gaiety, congratulated him on his handsome appearance.

"The servants of the bridegroom should be ready to receive him," was the colonel's sullen reply, and he abruptly handed a paper to Ingulph. Harrison could scarcely have known the whole contents, for although the rescript contained a positive command for Ingulph to hasten instantly to London, it was only



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to take the command of a regiment, to which he was appointed by Fairfax and Cromwell.

Nevertheless, he would not leave his attendance on the king until he was safely lodged in Windsor, where he was received apparently with the respect due to his former rather than his present state. Charles was in such excellent spirits, that when Ingulph came before him to take his leave, and according to the state which was now observed to him, knelt to kiss the sovereign's hand, he suddenly drew the young man's sword and knighted him before he had the opportunity to decline the honour.

"This is but an earnest of my favour; I trust I shall yet prove it in a way as far beyond your hopes as you can dream," said the king, with peculiar amenity. "And with that intent, I hope to see you soon again among the negotiators of a blessed and lasting peace."

## CHAPTER VI.

"Zeal is a dreadful termagant,
That teaches saints to tear and rant;
And Independants to profess
The doctrine of dependances:
Turns meek and sneaking secret ones
To raw-heads fierce and bloody bones,
And not content with endless quarrels
Against the wicked and their morals,
The Ghibilins, for want of Guelfs,
Divert their rage upon themselves."

HUDIBRAS.

ON arriving, London presented, to Ingulph, much the aspect of a city held by foreign invaders. The entrances were strictly guarded, and defended by cannon; wherever the eye turned, it encountered the glitter of casque or partizan. In fact, London was now the central point of the armies dispersed so lately in victory all over the kingdom, and which were now collected around the capital to consummate the last act of the prodigious drama.

Doubting that he had greatly offended the grandees of the army and Cromwell, by his refusal to obey their commands, the latter consideration pressed heavily on Ingulph's heart. But he was too proud to attempt recovering his place in favour by any

mean submission, and he determined to wait on Fairfax alone, though he well knew him to be only general in name.

Fairfax had taken up his quarters in a part of the modern palace of Whitehall, separated by the gardens from Stonehenge's gloomy keep. On arriving, Ingulph found the gates guarded by men whose principles he knew so well that he could not doubt that they were literally guards on the general.

Escorted by one of these grim pages, Ingulph proceeded to the general's presence. Approaching a large gilded door which stood ajar, a female voice was audible in a raised and excited tone, which, but that it was naturally melodious, might have been called scolding.

"And if you *do* consent!" the voice exclaimed, "you are a traitor and a dastard, and have betrayed all your oaths! and the sign of the covenant is truly but a rainbow, gilding for a while the black devices of these fanatic villains!"

Fairfax began to reply in a calm and somewhat submissive tone, when the soldier threw open the door, and Ingulph entered. Beside the lord-general and his wife, whose voice was that he had overheard, the Earl of Northumberland and two ladies were present. Both the latter wore vizards, but one had removed hers and was coquettishly playing with it. It was Lady Carlisle; but the still masked figure! Ingulph cast but one glance at her, and never dared to look again.

The earl looked profoundly grave; Fairfax puzzled and vexed; his wife flushed and her eye-

lids reddened with the frequent and disdainful stanching she was obliged to administer to her tears. But all glanced at Ingulph in great surprise.

"Some new command for your excellency from the council of war!" said Lady Fairfax, curtsying with scornful depth. Ingulph bowed still more profoundly, and replied, steadying his voice with difficulty, "My name is Dethewarre, madam; I have seen none of the council of war, and am here humbly to thank your Excellency for your kind censure of my proceedings, and to know your commands in my new service."

"Prithee what new service?" said Fairfax, haughtily.

Ingulph, in a low tone, named the regiment to the command of which he had been raised.

"Truly, the lieutenant asked it of me for a deserving officer—a friend of his!" said the lord-general, with a dubious stare. "But I thought that he—that the council of war—to refuse obedience to a superior strikes at the root of all military rule; and chiefliest, at my power, who am, carnally speaking, the supreme leader and general of these forces, under God."

"Shame on you, Fairfax, if this be the noble gentleman who brought the king from Hurst Castle!" said Lady Fairfax, warmly. "If you know not what to say, I'll give you words, and tell you, sir, you have discharged your duty like a true man and a gallant soldier. Would I could say the like of all, and we should have tinkers botching old saucepans —not the state."

"Women have tongues, women have tongues, you wot, Master Dethewarre," said the general, with laboured pleasantness. "But surely you have seen the lieutenant?—No!—and knighted too, or folks lie!—But truly I am glad his majesty's sacred person is lodged in safety."

"And yet you will suffer him to be led, like our blessed Lord himself, to the bar of the persecutors?" exclaimed the vehement lady.

"Foundlings, draymen, low-born, nameless rogues!" muttered Northumberland.

"What is this you talk?" exclaimed the general pettishly. "I am but the first of a running mob; whoso halts, stayeth them not, and is himself trampled."

"Nay, but as poor Waller might have said—you are the rudder which turns the whole barque," said Lady Carlisle, with a smile like those of the olden time, but somewhat dimmed, on Ingulph.

"Which striving to turn the vessel in a stormy sea, is itself reft and rent away!" said the young republican, hastily.

"My Lady De la Pole is not well," exclaimed Lady Carlisle, suddenly rising. "Take mine arm, love—we will get into the air."

The lady in the vizard arose feebly, and walked swimmingly over the floor, leaning on the countess's arm; but although Ingulph was near the door, he made not the least attempt, which in common politeness he ought, to open it.

"Poor child!" murmured Fairfax, mournfully.

"The vengeance of Heaven is indeed poured from full vials on this nation, when so innocent and beauteous a soul escapes not the general plague."

"Alack, she faints!" exclaimed Lady Carlisle, snatching the vizard from her companion's face, as she went tottering back; and she must have fallen, had not Ingulph darted forward, and caught her in his arms.

But she did not become insensible. Her face indeed was pale, as if sculptured in marble, but the expression of agony yielded not to the calm of forgetfulness. She murmured something indistinctly, which sounded like thanks, and sunk with a deep sigh into a chair, where Lady Carlisle continued fanning her with the vizard.

The sight of the beautiful victim of aristocratical prejudices rekindled all the republican in Ingulph's soul. He turned to the general, and in an altered tone requested to know if his excellency had any further commands.

"I have given none that I wot of," said Fairfax, perplexedly. "What we do we all do of one mind. —But your regiment being quartered in the hall of this mutinous city, and therefore a place of great notability and some danger—I would you should go before the council of officers, who meet shortly in the banqueting hall, to know their will."

"And I would, that now Master Dethewarre knows his general's, he troubles himself in no respect about the matter," said Lady Fairfax, passionately.

"Then even do as ye will—all of ye!" exclaimed the general, rising angrily. "For on my faith, the

meanest soldier in my army is less commanded than I am!"

Symptoms of altercation now became visible, and Ingulph hastened to take his departure, which he accomplished with one—but one—glance, where once he could have fixed his gaze for ever without weariness.

Stung by the recollections which this vision conjured up in his soul, like sleeping snakes awakened by the chance gleam of some traveller's fire, Ingulph wandered along so absently, that it was with a start he found himself opposite Holbein's Gate. And at the same time a figure which had long followed him, but of which he had hitherto only taken a dreamy cognizance, came up to him. It was the mulatto. Even this man was much changed, and his thick black hair was grizzled over in a way which contrasted curiously with his dark visage.

Carefully shunning to meet his eye, the mulatto informed Ingulph that Master Stonehenge desired to see him; and without waiting for question, moved on as if to guide to the place where he might be found. It was not without a moment's intense hesitation that Ingulph resolved to follow.

With a heart swelling full of anguish he crossed the well-known gardens, which lay now utterly neglected and desolate. But when they reached the entrance of the old palace, Lolo muttered that he would find his master in the laboratory in the tower, and disappeared so suddenly that Ingulph wondered whither.

Satisfied by the wish expressed for his presence

but inwardly marvelling for what purpose he was needed, Ingulph pursued his way through the long ranges of passages and winding stairs which led to the ancient tower.

Still, so doubtful was he of the state of mind or intentions of Stonehenge, that he mounted the stairs to his apartment very softly, intending first to reconnoitre the ground. The murmur of several voices as he approached the laboratory, admonished him to increase his caution; and mounting with breathless softness, he reached the door, and gently pushed it ajar in such a manner that he could see what was going on in the chamber, without being himself immediately noticed. And certes the sight was sufficiently mysterious.

In addition to the usual strange and sinister-looking furniture of the laboratory, on opposite sides of the room were now two short pillars or pedestals of brass, engraven with inscriptions in hieroglyphics, on each of which, in silver vases, flamed fires of naphtha and eastern drugs in pyramidal shapes. Between these two pedestals was a table, on each side of which stood an iron chair, of singular construction, as if to gratify some peculiar notions of convenience.

The red glow of the flames mingled with an inexpressibly gloomy effect with the melancholy shades of sunset through the lozenge-shaped glass of the lattices. Around these pedestals were seven or eight ecclesiastics, in the precision garb, attentively surveying divers quaintly carved toys and figures handed to them by a personage whom Ingulph

recognised as Hopkins the witch-finder. The air of conceit and infallibility in this man's visage contrasted with the doubting, fearful looks of the persons whom he addressed very singularly. They all looked pale and strongly excited, and not without a cause, since all had been fasting for many hours to obtain a blessing on their arduous task.

"God's life! (saving your reverences,) I fear there can be but little doubt in the matter!" Hopkins was saying, as he curiously surveyed a little carving which he held in his hand. "'Tis of pure gold, and is either the image of some demon which she worships, (for you know, Master Calamy—none better!) that witchcraft, popery, and idolatry, go together; or 'tis the means whereby she tortures that excellent and unhappy gentleman, her husband—though I see no pins stuck in it, and in general they are of wax;—but, poor man, who that sees the taking he is in, but must conclude concerning what hellish devices are practised against him!—Well, well, 'tis a rare case, but I hope to bring it to a good conclusion."

"I do trust, Master Hopkins, that you will," replied the divine thus addressed. "And to that intent, let us on our knees beseech the Lord to grant us some special grace and mercy, to know whether this woman be innocent or guilty, that we may not unwittingly bring on ourselves the curse of blood!"

"Alack, she gives no sign of repentance, nor of confession!" said Hopkins; "although they have trotted her up and down between two, (on account

of the two thieves, as your reverences may remember,) these eight hours without breath or pause."

"I would it had pleased my brethren, and my Lord Fairfax, not to put me on this task," said Calamy, mournfully. "For on the one hand to be guilty of innocent blood, on the other to let loose a manifest and hateful enemy of God, wrestle even as two strong enemies in my soul."

"We'll find a way, your reverence, we'll find a way," said Hopkins, encouragingly. "I have not been at my trade these three years to botch it now; as many shirts as the devil hath shifts have I—I'll warrant him!"

Ingulph had heard enough to excite a very painful feeling of curiosity; and he was about to enter to ascertain the meaning of the assembly, when his eye suddenly encountered that of Stonehenge, who had apparently been watching him for some time, but in so deep a convolution of thought that he seemed to have forgotten his person and his own summons.

Ingulph broke the spell, by advancing into the chamber, and staring with unaffected amazement around.

"You see—here he is—he could not resist the spell!" said Stonehenge, springing forward, clasping his hands over his head, and laughing outright, so that the roof echoed to the unnatural and dissonant mirth.

"What is your business here, sir?" said Calamy, in a mild and soothing tone.

"To see—Master Stonehenge," replied Ingulph, after a slight pause of surprise.

"Ere she come, it were not amiss to shackle and fetter him," said Hopkins; "such is the power of the evil one, (for though I am familiar enough with him, I like not to call names before your reverences,) that at times only bonds of steel can keep parties asunder under the circumstances."

"Nay, sirs, let our honoured guest be seated—that is enough," said Stonehenge; "take one of these seats—it matters not which, they are equally pleasant."

There was something indescribably sinister and cunning in the expression of Stonehenge's eye; but as he ushered Ingulph towards a chair with great demonstrations of civility, to avoid irritating him, and with the hope of obtaining some explanation, Ingulph sat down. In an instant a fellow who was concealed behind, probably for the purpose, seized him from behind across the breast; Stonehenge snatched his sword from the sheath; and before Ingulph could understand, much less resist their purpose, they had linked him to a series of chains and hooks of iron, which seemed contrived with that intent, to the chair; and so powerfully, that when he made an effort to spring from their clutches, he found himself unable to stir.

"Heaven knows whether iron will keep him!—'tis a rank witch," said Hopkins, with an air of supreme conceit; and at the moment observing his worthy comrade, Sterne, enter, "Why, John, John,"

he continued, "how is this?—have you left her, man?—why, it needs but a few moments' rest, and the devil comes to them, and hearteneth the witch, and then our trouble's for our pains!"

"The witch is senseless, master; I want to know whether we may give her a taste of water," replied the confederate, smiling and scratching his greasy locks.

"Well!—but you must mind there be nothing in it that may seem to you like a dead fly," replied Hopkins, emphatically. "And now bring her hither!—Ofttimes the imps take cunninger forms than any dead fly to get at them!" he concluded, with a masterly twisting of the mouth.

"Surely, reverend men, this infernal wretch hath not your sanctions to his cruelties?" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Ay, the fit increases as she draws nigh," said Hopkins, taking no more notice of this observation than if it had been the raving of one in a fever. "They tell me she hath a marvellous skill in the viol!—Dozens and dozens have I known who have sold their redemptions for less; yea, for matters so inconsiderable, that sometimes I myself do marvel at the cheapness in which human souls are held, that they should be sold and bought at a poorer rate than old songs in pedlars' packs."

"And therefore, sirs, is it not reasonable to conclude that these charges are as false as they are absurd?" exclaimed Ingulph, who felt that he was in the power of these besotted bigots.

"Deem you that it is by natural means that I am

thus tortured?—that my heart glows in my bosom as in a dish of perpetual fire?" said Stonehenge, ravingly. "Whence are those riches she brought me, that but a few years agone was a savage dweller in the golden forests of Mexico?—And is not yonder bird her familiar spirit?"

Ingulph glanced in the direction indicated, and perceived, indeed, Ramona's macaw; but all its cheer was gone. It was chained closely to a stool, and seemed partly blind, from the moping unconscious manner in which it sat in the little sunset-glow of the window. The sight affected him so much, remembering the past in vivid contrast, that tears stood in his eyes.

"'Tis an abominably bad sign," said Hopkins, gazing at the bird. "'Tis impossible to imagine what strange forms the imps of darkness will take to be near their feeders; for as long as the compact lasts they sweetly suck them every four-and-twenty hours. I knew one that had her imp in the likeness of a tame frog; another keeps them chirping like crickets behind the fire. At Yarmouth we brought sixteen to justice, and never a one of them but had her imp; sometimes in the likeness of a feeble sickly changeling of a child, or a lark in a wooden cage, or some such country matter. Nay, I have known one that was like a small worm, in a witch's flower-pot, that stood harmless enough, as some thought, in a window-sill, and flowered every day in the year excepting Christmas."

"To observe that superstition proves the devil himself a papist," observed one of the presbyters.

"I'll warrant him he is near being one as any Laudean prelate of them all," said Hopkins, much gratified.

"I do beseech you, gentlemen, for your good wits' sake, listen not to these monstrous fables," exclaimed Ingulph.

"You see, sirs, how strongly it works in him," said Hopkins, compassionately. "Keep a good look out on him; I have known some not to be restrained, but when they have seen the witch, fly at her as joyfully as hawks at red meat."

"Courage, sir, we will not let you go," said two of the presbyters, kindly hastening up to Ingulph, and adding their strength to that of the iron shackles. Neither did they seem likely to fail in their promise, for they were both very strong men.

"I do hear," continued Hopkins," that there are no worse malefactors in this sort, than in New England and our other plantations."

"Villain, if you speak of Mistress Stonehenge, she comes not thence, but from Mexico," shouted Ingulph.

"Worse and worse! Body o' me, I thought so," replied the witch-finder, imperturbably. "But here she comes! Some of us should now attentively watch the possessed person, and I think I'll show I know my trade as well as any man in Christendom, I care not who's the other."

A door at the extremity of the chamber suddenly flew open, and Ramona entered.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Her unregarded locks
Matted like furies' tresses; her poor limbs
Chained to the ground, and 'stead of those delights
Which happy lovers taste, her keeper's stripes."

OTWAY.

THE unhappy victim of the madness of the times appeared, dragged along between Sterne and another assistant, or rather accomplice, of the witch-finder. She had a lost, vacant, exhausted, quite unresisting look and manner; her beautiful black hair hung dishevelled upon her shoulders; her dress was in tatters; her white and exquisitely sculptured feet bare and bleeding; her eye flashed distractedly over the groups, but it was doubtful whether she really noted who were there.

"Walk on—up and down—not a moment's rest, or 'tis all to begin again," said Hopkins, folding his arms, and leisurely surveying the victim as they walked her rapidly past. "Ay, methinks I see something like a blue bat, with fiery eyes, flapping over her head. I doubt now if any of you see it. But every man to his trade. How is it with you, Master Dethewarre? That's a main question now. How do you feel?"

"If I were loose, villain, I would make a meal of you for dogs!" shouted the exasperated prisoner.

"Alack, poor gentleman!" said Hopkins; "the witch has given him a philtre, perchance, with a live child boiled in it, and I know well what eastern drugs and spices, but 'tis not good to be given out. Do you remember, sir, to have partaken of any mess of her cooking?"

"Villain!" was all that Ingulph replied, endeavouring in vain to catch the eye of Ramona as they hurried her up and down the chamber.

"I do hope, Master Hopkins, you do all this in mercifulness, and not in malice?" said Calamy, in a very troubled tone.

"Does your reverence think that for a beggarly twenty shillings, (that's my fee, with board, lodging, and travelling expenses in the country parts,) or say 'tis doubled by any liberal employer's gratitude," said Hopkins. "Do you think the committee would not only allow, but with thanks, all my means of discovery?"

"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," said one of the divines, striving to harden his heart.

"Nay, the translation of that word is something doubtful, brother," said Calamy. "I would the point were more clearly ascertained, for 'tis a fearful penalty to hang on a doubtful point of scholarship."

A number of voices instantly arose in favour of the interpretation of the Hebrew word into witch,

and a warm dispute ensued, in which great treasures of erudition were displayed.

"'Tis no business of mine; I am no scholar; but what I stand on is the law of the land," said Hopkins, resolutely. "And let me tell your reverences, that whereas certain hag-advocates have gainsayed my doings, the committee have caused them to recant from their own pulpits!"

"But there are other men in power now who are men, and will not suffer this inhuman cruelty!" exclaimed Ingulph, furiously.

It seemed for the first time as if his voice reached the senses of Ramona; she started, and despite all efforts of her guard, suddenly tore away from them, and rushed to Ingulph, shrieking, "Save me, save me!"

He could only stretch his powerless arms, indifferent to what interpretation might be put on the act; but Stonehenge rushed upon her, and with the two assistants, tore her away.

"Bring her hither; bring her hither; we must try other means," said Hopkins, pompously. Sterne instantly dragged her up to his master, and all but the sage himself looked at her with some degree of pity.

"Now, my fine madam! have you the impudence to brazen it out to me—to *me*, mark you!—that you are not a witch?" said Hopkins, in a fierce bullying tone. "Hark you, Satan, do you hear me, for thou and I are old acquaintances?"

"Answer him, damsel, truly, for your unhappy soul's sake," said Calamy, in a gentle tone.

Ramona looked at him with a wild mixture of scorn and terror for a moment, muttered some indistinct and broken sounds, and then laughed.

"It is the foul one laughs within her; I appeal to you, gentlemen, if I have said aught to move a Christian soul to mirth?" said Hopkins.

"I laughed but to think how the false old man hath broken faith with me, promising me vengeance ever and ever and ever, and it hath come to this!" she said, sinking with a deep sigh of exhaustion on the floor.

"Be merciful, Stonehenge!" said Ingulph, tears gushing from his eyes in torrents. "Remember how you loved her once, how you have brought her to this land, from every other human aid or pity."

"I remember," replied Stonehenge, in a calm relentless tone. "Let her confess, then, that she is in alliance with the Power of Evil, and muttered my secrets to you at Hurst Castle!"

Ingulph started. "Master Calamy," he exclaimed, "you are not mad too, to suffer this unhappy girl to be tortured for an impossible crime, to gratify a madman's revenge!"

"Impossible!—the cloven foot of the Sadducee pokes out there plainly enough," said one of the aghast fanatics.

"Confess, unhappy wretch! confess thine abominations," said Calamy, with pathetic zeal. "Oh, if thou knew the ease and solace of soul which will thereupon visit thee, and the redemption which may yet be hoped!"

"Confess nothing, Ramona!—they want but a pretext to burn thee alive!" said Ingulph, wildly.

"Leave him alone; the fit will pass when I have burned a lock of her hair," said Hopkins, drawing a pair of scissors from his pouch of instruments; and partly cutting, partly tearing off a lock of her plenteous hair, he threw it into the fire.

"And now we must strip and examine her for the devil's marks," he continued, as the light blaze expired. "I 'll wager any man a testoon we find half-a-dozen in as many minutes."

"No, no!" groaned Stonehenge, panting as if his heart would burst.

"I must do my duty, an't please your honour," said Hopkins, deliberately.

"Nay, we must neglect no human means to come at the truth," said a presbyter, demurely. "I trust no man will suspect any in this presence of an indecent prying or carnal-minded curiosity; therefore, Master Hopkins, do as you Christianly and fitly aver—namely, your duty."

But it seemed as if this last outrage roused Ramona to despair; she leaped up, and snatching some burning charcoal from the brazier, threw it, with wild shrieks, among her tormentors, as they rushed to secure her. Ingulph meanwhile struggled in the iron chair, and with the two presbyters, but in vain. Ramona was of course soon overpowered, and Hopkins bound her hands and feet together with his rope. He then deliberately proceeded to examine her neck and arms, from which the assistants had torn the covering.

"What's here?—a mole, no doubt, as some will call it," said the master, curiously examining a small excrescence of the kind on a bosom else of perfect beauty. "Give me my needle, and let us try whether it be insensible or not."

Sterne handed his worthy master a long keen bodkin, the point of which Hopkins nicely tested, as if it were a surgical operation, and suddenly plunged it into the mole, and much below it, for a spout of blood instantly followed. Ingulph now yelled aloud with cries of murder, till the sound seemed as if it would reach the sky.

"They cannot hear the unhappy energumene below," said a presbyter, calmly. "For I note the vessels on the river are of a marvellous small size from this window."

"She bleeds!—which is strange enough," said Hopkins, somewhat surprisedly. "Yet for all that, I'll stake my credit, that if we keep her in sight during four-and-twenty hours longer, we shall see her imp come in, and suck at it."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, let us try that experiment, for I may no more endure this!" said Calamy, rising in agony; and the brutal ruffian glanced inquiringly among the presbyters. Observing perhaps that the general expression was not altogether encouraging—"Nay, at all your honours' pleasures, I would but do my duty," he said, coolly sheathing his bodkin. "But where is this cacodæmon or parroquet, or whatever it is called?—Let us see if it will feed at the mark."

The mulatto advanced with officious zeal from a

remote part of the chamber, where he had stood for some time unnoticed, with the bird on his wrist. Affrighted by the glare and strange visages on its purblind gaze, the bird uttered shrill discordant cries, which roused Ramona to consciousness. She murmured a feeble call to her ancient comrade, and it flew with another cry to her, perched on her shoulder, and stood jabbering and flapping its wings in terror.

"There is only one chance for it now—to wring its neck off; but who will bell the cat?" said Hopkins, retreating to a reasonable distance, an example which was followed by most of his coadjutors.

Ramona meanwhile babbled something to her bird in Spanish, which seemed then to recognise her, and lovingly put its bill to her mouth, a girlish trick which she had taught it, as it were, to kiss her.

"Ye all see that?" said Hopkins, turning with a look of horror to the rest.

"Monsters! if it loved human blood as ye do, would it not sip at the wound?" shouted Ingulph.

"Do not kill it; indeed it is honestly mine; my father gave it me," said Ramona, with a pathetic bewilderment which, but that men's hearts were steeled by prejudice, must have melted them to pity.

"But I had rather, much rather, we tried the experiment you spoke of, Hopkins!" said Calamy, mournfully.

"Of the ducking-stool?—ay, the river is convenient enow, if we had two boats," said the witch-finder.

"Nay!—the four-and-twenty hours!" gasped In-

gulph. "Meanwhile, release me! by what right do you keep me here? Monsters, I will demand every drop of that blood ye have shed to your own hearts' drainings, if hearts ye have!"

"Poor demoniac!—'tis well he is secured," said Hopkins. "But let us also look after the cacodæmon!" And he made a dart at the bird, which, however, flew startled into the air, and disappeared at the open window. "Whither is it gone?" he said, staring blankly. "But it will return within the four-and-twenty hours; it must return. 'Tis but to keep her waking for that time, and ten to one she confesses enough to make a broil of her, and to set all our hair on end. But we must secure her well, for I have known them reared up in the air, by the devil's power, so that a dozen strong men could not keep 'em down."

In pursuance of this new and comparatively humane experiment, by Hopkins's directions they set the supposed sorceress, bound as she was, on the table, to which they farther secured her by light thongs. Ingulph could merely look on in silent horror, but he observed with some satisfaction, that Ramona had relapsed into a state of dreamy insensibility.

The skilful Witch-finder continued his operations without the least compunction. He directed the door to be opened to allow free adit to the imps, and ordered his assistants to keep on the alert, lest they should approach disguised as spiders, flies, or other small insects, which in his experience he had frequently detected. Seats were then procured for the

commissioners, and in solemn silence they awaited the result of the experiment.

The wintry twilight had now darkened in, and at Hopkins's command his fellow-torturer lighted two blazing pitch-torches, with which they stood on each side of the ordeal.

The silence was unbroken for some time, save by the faint moans of the ill-starred Mexican, whose head drooping on her breast, allowed the masses of dark hair to fall over her figure with a singularly fearful effect, as if the form lacked a visage. At last, Calamy, who, with all the aid of superstition and fanaticism, could not quite stifle every feeling of humanity, proposed that they should kneel and pray that the culprit might have grace to confess, and so be released from her sufferings.

"You pray on your side, and I will balance on the other!" said Stonehenge, with a wild smile, and prostrating himself on the ground.

"Do you believe that heaven, too, will be your accomplice in this foul murder?" said Ingulph, who was now fearfully excited.

"For this unhappy youth in especial, let us wrestle in prayer!" said Calamy, throwing himself on his knees, an action imitated by all present. The prayer lasted for some time, and would have lasted longer, but that it was interrupted by a shriek from Ramona, who raised her head, and glared wildly round. What vision her delirious fancy shaped in the dusky phantoms around her, might readily be guessed from what she gasped forth.

"So, you have caught him at last!" she said, in a

tone of heart-broken anguish. "You may kill me now; I care not; but do not gnaw his beautiful head; lay it on my heart, and bury us together."

"Hear ye that? This is the most in the bull's-eye of aught we have yet heard!" said Hopkins, triumphantly. "This is the true spectral evidence, concerning which his late majesty, King James, (though kings be no great authorities in spiritual matters, I own,) declareth that no man, but who hath made a compact with the fiend, can ever see! Just as water will not drown any one who hath renounced his baptism, since our Lord was baptized in the Red Sea; nay, the Jordan, but I thought of the blessed Israelites passing it."

"Thou lying bedlamite!" raved Ingulph. "Is it so special an advantage to be drowned, that it can only be conceded to the just?"

"Atheist!" muttered Hopkins, but the blaze in Ingulph's eye, shackled though he was, checked any farther eloquence of the sort. Ingulph now furiously renewed his demands to be set at liberty, but he was only answered by compassionate glances, and shakings of the head.

Meanwhile Ramona again sunk into a low deep moaning, which gradually died away, until there was again deep silence.

"Stir her, stir her! she must not sleep!" exclaimed Hopkins. "'Twere a strange dispensation for a witch to sleep sweetly on, while the poor possessed person keeps his eyes stark open, like the unhappy gentleman's here!—But so it is!—I remember a case of a husbandman in Norfolk, that

was bewitched by an old hag for denying her but three turnips for a sick grandchild's broth! There's a ballad made about it, on purpose to be sung in towns and villages, to the great startling and warning of such cattle. How was it, Jack? Thou hast it at thy tongue's end."

"It goes to the tune of

'A doleful brew my goodwife made,'"

replied the worthy thus interpellated.

"'To see the devil making hay,
A rare sight were on any day;
On a Sabbath eve, in the month of May,
Rowantree saw it done!'

"'For Sibbald Sympson, a witch she was.'"—

But at this point of the interesting ballad Sterne was interrupted by the exquisitely sweet voice of Ramona trilling out a very lively melody. Never, even in her brightest hours of enjoyment, had she sung with a voice more purely mellifluous, tender, and expressive of the sunniness of spirit preserved from her far southern land. Rude as was the rhythm of Sterne's ballad, it had, doubtless, struck some chord of association in her bewildered brain.

Ingulph remembered that she generally accompanied the burden of the air, the very words of which seemed to dance, with a graceful movement of her feet and hands. It seemed that she attempted this usual accompaniment, for singing the

"'O, que bien que bayle Gil,
Con las niñas de Barajas!'"

she stirred her shackled frame, and instantly her shrieks of agony rent the air.

"Mercy! mercy! if ye are not merely men in form!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Mercy! why 'tis the very time now to keep it up, seeing the devil's power is spent, for I doubt he will not get her to sing again," said Hopkins, joyfully. "Indeed, it were now an excellent thing to apply the torches to her arm-pits—they can seldom hold out against that!"

"No, no, let me speak to her! She shall confess," said Ingulph imploringly. "Ramona, do you remember me?"

"I loved you well at first, but you did not love me; and indeed I needed something to love me," said the victim, pausing from her shrieks, and gazing at him with startled earnestness. "Ingulph! Ingulph! go and bring my father! Tell him they are burning me at a slow fire, and Stonehenge, whom he loved so well, has set me to it. Did he give him all his wealth to murder me? He is in his grave, over the dark, dark sea, but he will come to me when you tell him this."

"Ay, I warrant me, her father! We should have the devil among us soon, in some grave disguise, with spectacles on his nose, and an ink-horn at his girdle, as befel when we kept watch on the witch in Hungerford steeple," said Hopkins, facetiously.

"Ramona! in heaven's name look around, and remember where you are!" said Ingulph.

"Oh, yes, now I remember; we are in the forests

again; the glorious, fresh, green ocean of leaves around us," said Ramona, in a voice of delight. "Are they going to sacrifice some one, that they dance around the flames hand in hand, and laugh and hoot? Where is the bound one, then?"

"She speaks now of the devil's sabbath, which she has no doubt attended oft and oft again," said Hopkins, eagerly. "Come now, girl, make a clean breast of it, and tell us how you went there—on a cat, a dog, a broomstick, or what?"

"On the sunset—the sun sets over my father's grave," said Ramona, imitating the motion of waves with her head. "So and so—I am going thither, and let De la Pole come with me, and we will never trouble you any more."

"De la Pole, saith she? What, another sheep in the marsh?" said Hopkins, significantly nodding his head. "We shall hear fine things now she is once in train; in what form did the devil appear at those meetings, child? Did you renounce your baptism, and sign the compact with your own blood, or did another witch prick her finger for the purpose?"

"Lolo led me there," replied Ramona, vacantly.

"Ay, indeed! I thought all was not right in that quarter," said Hopkins, significantly, and the mulatto glided like an eel out of his sight. "Well, and prithee, whom else did you see there?"

"We were all sitting under the vines that are on the hill-top," said Ramona, with a placid smile. "You may see the sun shining over thousands of miles, and the blue mountains, and the sea like a line

of silver along the sky. My father was there, and Stonehenge—but he loved me then, and if the way were rough would bear me in his arms."

"I see the devil speaks falsely in her, to accuse as good and liberal and honest a citizen as ever I knew," said Hopkins, angrily. "There is nothing for it but to duck her. Let anybody ask what he will, for I have done."

The presbyters now begun putting unnumbered questions to poor Ramona, each anxious to display his own sagacity; and while all were thus absorbed, Ingulph felt his shoulder touched; starting round he beheld the mulatto with his finger pressed on his lips.

"Make way quietly out, and bring assistance—you can do nought alone," he said in a loud whisper.

"I cannot," replied Ingulph in the same tone.

"You are free now," returned the mulatto, and cutting some ropes at the back of the chair, Ingulph started up from his confinement. His first idea was to rush upon the assembly and rescue Ramona, but the certainty of being overpowered by numbers restrained him; and seeing no better could be done, he complied with the shadowy motions of the mulatto, and glided out unperceived.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"Methinks we stand on ruin; nature shakes
About us; and the universal frame's
So loose, that it but wants another push
To leap from its hinges."

DRYDEN.

To hasten for assistance—but whither? None could be hoped from Fairfax, or from the presbyterian populace, whose belief in witches was only equalled by their exceeding horror of them. Ingulph suddenly recollected that the council of officers was to meet at this time, and forgetting all other considerations, he hastened before them.

He was but just in time; the council was breaking up, and among the first persons whom he encountered was Cromwell. The lieutenant was much altered, and his usually robust complexion was tinged with an unhealthy saffron hue.

Scarcely returning, or even noticing, the cordial reception he received, Ingulph gave a brief recital of the scene he had witnessed, and demanded the aid of a guard to rescue Ramona.

Fairfax, to whom he addressed himself, answered drily that he had no jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastic, or he would have exerted himself to remove

the excommunication under which the youth himself laboured. But Cromwell, after watching for a moment the expression of fury and disappointment in Ingulph's face, said quietly, "Nay, my lord, the whole power of the state is in our hands, and we are responsible to the nation for its use: therefore I am of opinion, that although the presbyters may, for aught I know, have the right to discover witches, they have none to put to such grievous tortures freeborn English subjects—or if she be a foreigner, a human being; so, Colonel Dethewarre, come with me."

No one offered any contradiction; and with a strong picquet of the guard, Cromwell hastened with his young officer to the old palace, uttering not a single word on the way.

The independents, besides being the only sect which admitted and practised the most religious of all dogmas—toleration—were freed from many of the degrading superstitions of their fanatic brethren. Among the rest, the belief in witchcraft had much declined among them; and seeing their general anxious to set the witch in question free, they hastened on with great zeal to the work.

But entering the gardens of the old palace, they suddenly encountered disordered groups of the presbyters, flying in great consternation. From their affrighted statements, it appeared, that on Hopkins intending to remove the witch to duck her, Stonehenge had suddenly protested that she was innocent, that they were vile impostors, released his unhappy wife, and drove them all out with frantic violence.

Almost immediately after, Hopkins appeared with his satellite, calling to some of the reverend men to return, and exorcise the fiend out of his worthy employer.

The opportunity of inflicting retributive justice was instantly taken by Ingulph. Hopkins carried a ducking-stool, and the necessary ropes, in his own hands, and Ingulph ordered him to be seized, assuring the soldiers that from all he had seen of the marvellous skill of the man in detecting witches, he was convinced that he was himself a wizard. At all events he could not object to pass through an ordeal to which he had subjected so many others, on less appearances, which he should therefore undergo. In spite of all the witch-finder's abject entreaties, the sentence was executed; and Cromwell, laughing heartily, encouraged the soldiers to their task.

The joke was in itself irresistible to the soldiery, and Ingulph, aware that his vengeance was now in very good hands, directed them to take him to the river, and duck him until he confessed. He then hurried on with his commander to the old palace, and at its entrance encountered the mulatto. On finding that Ingulph had effected his escape, he said, and not being able to find out by what means, Stonehenge had suddenly accepted it as a proof of Ramona's innocence! She was now conveyed to her own apartment in the palace, and attended by her servants, and by Stonehenge himself, with every mark of tenderness and repentance.

But Ingulph would not be satisfied by any but ocular evidence of this happy change; and the lieu-

tenant deigned to humour his impetuosity so far as to accompany him on his search. The mulatto led the way to the apartment in which Ramona had formerly resided; and there, stretched on a couch, with several women aiding in various ways to revive her, and Stonehenge himself kneeling beside her, and weeping like a child, lay the victim of fanatic madness.

Ingulph approached softly, and Cromwell himself stood at the end of the couch, gazing in sorrow and astonishment at the woful spectacle.

"Wake her! wake her! and I will forgive you all!" said Stonehenge, clasping his hands deliriously as Ingulph approached. He made no reply, and bending over her, was surprised to see that her eyes were open, but unmeaning, and, as it were, insensible or regardless to all around. He gazed at her in silence, and his hot tears distilled on her face; she looked at him for some time fixedly, and the gradual return of thought and recollection was apparent in the wonderful brightening up of her eyes.

"Ingulph!" she said, at last, in a tone scarcely more than a sigh; and his tears only replied. "Will you assist me to rise?" she continued, after a slight pause. "I am going on a journey—you will be easily rid of me."

"Whither, Ramona?" said Dethewarre, in a mournful voice.

"To my husband—to Stonehenge," she replied, with a ghastly smile.

"To Stonehenge!—to your husband!" repeated Ingulph.

"Yes, for he will avenge me; I tell you, he will avenge me; when he knows all, he will avenge me!" she said, with rising vehemence. "He is a sorcerer; he will avenge me!"

"Yea, my Ramona! yea, my lamb! I will avenge thee on all the earth!" said Stonehenge, with a cry resembling that of a famished panther, and perhaps imitated from recollections of his forest wanderings.

"But you must not, you shall not forgive me, sir!" she said, turning with affecting implicitness to Stonehenge. "I have so utterly betrayed you, that you must—I know you must—murder me; but do not weep, for I pity you more than myself!—Oh, that we were once again, Stonehenge, in the free woods, with the golden heavens over our heads, and that you would smile again, as you did then, when I brought you the flowers to ask their names."

The memories thus conjured up of that innocent bygone, seemed to convulse Stonehenge with grief; and he staggered out of the chamber. One of the women had been busy preparing a soothing drink of some kind, and she now approached with it.

"Is it poison?" said Ramona, draining it without the least hesitation. "But let me die in the sunlight; 'tis my only kindred in this far foreign land," she added, with a profound sigh. "Why do you all look sorrowfully at me?—I pray you, do not; I can bear anything but pity!—But remember, Ingulph, whenever I die, that my last breath blessed you—and you alone on all the earth—for you only have I found human on it."

She turned away with a placid smile, and after a

few moments' languor, sunk into a kind of slumber akin to insensibility.

The lieutenant now intimated to Ingulph that it would be proper for him to retire; and perceiving, indeed, that his presence could no longer be of use, he consented, announcing to the women that he would endeavour to prevail on Tribulation to return to her long abdicated trust; and making the mulatto promise to send him constant intelligence how matters went, he departed.

In any other age no man could have doubted that Stonehenge's proceedings were those of an insane person; but so rooted and general were the prejudices on witchcraft, and against the unfortunate Ramona, that her very women, who had constantly attended on her, could scarcely overcome their fears, even after her accuser's direct admission of her innocence.

Ingulph was now in the proper mood for any desperate purpose, and the sagacious lieutenant seemed to be well aware of it. He accompanied him to the city, chatting familiarly on the aspect of political affairs. The influence of the victorious leader over his young follower returned with all the added force which recent services could give.

"So you paid your respects to the lord-general first, and truly he ought to have all deference shown him," said Cromwell, smiling. "But what says his excellency to your dispute with daft Harrison, as they call men in Scotland with thrice his wit."

In attempting to answer this question, Ingulph found that he had no very distinct idea on the sub-

ject himself; and after watching his puzzled countenance for a moment, the lieutenant laughed aloud.

"I thought not," he said; "but you shall know my judgment more clearly, which is, that if I had not known of what metal you were made, I had never consented to let the millennium apostle be sent to supersede you."

"The blood of an assassinated king would have done small service to our cause," said Ingulph.

"Assassinated!—Harrison is a mad enthusiastic, but I know not that his zeal would have transported him to such an atrocity," said Cromwell, gravely; "but what is this about Huncks? He speaks strange matters concerning you, and it appears you are the last knight from his majesty's sword."

Ingulph related the whole story, suppressing only his suspicions concerning Stonehenge.

"The rogue shall hang to-night!" said Cromwell, vehemently. "But if thou wert cajoled with Charles's fair words, I blame thee not, seeing that I myself, with all my years and experience, was nigh won over to him; but truly I esteem Machiavel was unlearned in many of his depths. Natheless your actions have not swerved from the right. The Lord who breaketh the cedars of Lebanon cannot spare this crowned criminal."

"What is to be done with him?" said Ingulph, eagerly.

"The council of war have this evening determinedly resolved to bring him to trial," said Cromwell, enthusiastically. "Certainly this judgment is of the Lord! I might have doubted had the notion

sprung from any other source than it did. Offuscations of passion might have clouded our reasons, and the resolution might be adjudged the turbid lightning natural to such disordered spheres. But when thou, whose generous soul is a fitting tabernacle of the holiest oracles—when thou spoke out those famous words, I did feel a sudden illumination through all my ways, even as a heavenly sunburst through the darkness of night."

"But I spoke of a trial, fair, open, just!" said Ingulph, not insensible to this sublime compliment.

"Let all the world witness, if it is not!" replied Cromwell. "Read this list of those who are appointed to the judgment;—is there one of them who would hesitate to pronounce as his conscience dictates, in the teeth of hell itself? Nay, who would not feel a secret joy to encounter martyrdom in the cause—in any cause? Thou and Algernon Sydney are both of the list—what needs other assurance?"

"We are, as it were, parties to the cause—an appeal to the whole nation is a fitter way," said Ingulph, dubiously.

"We are the people appointed to do the work of the Lord!" returned Cromwell. "An appeal to the nation!—know you not that we stand one to ten against royalists and presbyterians?—and are you prepared to set up in all his power the perfidious tyrant who crushed your youth, and deprived you of the woman you love?—Or the merciless bigots who have this day slaughtered the woman for whom you have been so falsely persecuted?"

The balance, which had perhaps but little wavered,

was now struck; and Ingulph acquiesced in all the measures which his commander pointed out to him to secure the safety of the city. The quarters of his regiment were at Guildhall, and his business, it appeared, was to watch the movements of the Londoners, who were known to be in the highest degree disaffected to the contemplated policy.

At Ludgate, Cromwell left his young ally, observing, with a sarcastic smile, that he cared not to face the citizens after the wreck of their beloved covenant. Ingulph proceeded alone to Bulstocke's house.

Approaching the armourer's well-known abode, Ingulph was surprised to hear sounds of uproarious merriment; and entering the worthy citizen's abode, he found his kitchen occupied by a riotous band of soldiers, who were all so nearly drunk that they had forgotten their usual sanctity of demeanour. Bulstocke himself, for the first time an unwilling spectator of a feast, two of them were holding in his chair, swelling nigh to burst with indignation, while they swallowed his wines before his face, and ironically pledged his health. Tribulation stood behind, scolding frantically at the pitch of her voice, while Mistress Bulstocke sat drying her tears in a clean white apron.

Ingulph instantly observed that his favourite, Joyce, was of the number of the rioters, and from the uniforms which the soldiers wore, he perceived they belonged to the regiment to which he was appointed.

"Soh, my masters, is this your discipline?—is

this demeanour for Christian and godly men?" exclaimed Ingulph.

"I thought—your honour's own friends—to protect them," muttered Joyce.

"Trimmers, papists, cavaliers, prelatists, devils, are all better than ye, schismatic dogs!" yelled on Tribulation. "And thou, their commander, art fit to be so, and nothing else; and for this purpose, and the damnation of many, wert thou born!"

"Out of my house, and fellow with murderers like yourself!" shouted Bulstocke. "Wife, this is one of the villains who will kill the king!"

"Ay, ay, strut in thy borrowed plumes as thou wilt," continued the enraged sibyl. "But I that have made can unmake thee!—I will, I will!—What cause had I to peril my soul for thee, in whose veins flowed her blood for whom I was scorned and betrayed!"

"I have heard indeed that you—that we—are of nearer kin than you admit in your conventicle," said Ingulph, exceedingly enraged. "But if you deny the relationship, I plead not for it,"

"And Cromwell is your father, doubtless—and you are bringing Charles to the scaffold at the traitor's will!" said Tribulation, wildly. "This horror must not be—yet how to prevent it!"

"If you have any remains of humanity, hasten to display it by the death-bed of your betrayed charge, Ramona!" exclaimed Ingulph. "She is dying—tortured to death—your presence may yet save her whose absence once ruined her!"

"Were she my own daughter, I will never enter

that house again from which I have been dismissed with contumely!" said Tribulation, in increasing passion. "Have then enough of my son in you to take the hint, when I bid you avoid this house, regicide, and never dare to enter it again!"

"To arms, rogues, and follow me on the instant!" said Ingulph, scornfully turning on his heel; and with a bitter heart, he left the house, resolving indeed that it should be for ever.

## CHAPTER IX.

"Love, justice, nature, pity and revenge,
Have kindled up a wildfire in my breast,
And I am all a civil war within."

DRYDEN.

THE preliminaries of the stupendous event on which the whole civilized world gazed with mingled terror and amazement, were rapidly consummated; and yet the wishes of all parties, save those of the planners, seemed opposed; foreign powers implored, the Scots protested, the people murmured,—but inexorably as destiny they proceeded.

In the fiery atmosphere which he now breathed, even the pure diamond of Ingulph's intellect grew heated to madness. The dreadful charges now brought against the king, the details of cruelty and oppression ransacked from the annals of his past despotism, heightened by contrast the beauty and glory of that sublime and poetical dream which was his meaning of the word Republic.

And now, for the first time since the beginning of the world, was promulgated that famous dogma, which, like Demogorgon, threatens to dethrone all the gods—the sovereignty of the people. The House of Lords was virtually abolished by the resolution

of the Commons, on their refusal, to proceed without them in the charge; the High Court of Justice was formed, and the royal state and homage with which the hopes and pride of the monarch had been flattered, were ordered to be discontinued.

Ingulph imagined he had screwed his courage to the sticking point, but as the day approached when the proceedings were to open, the anguish and disorder of his mind increased. Meanwhile he continued at his post, or engaged in the business of preparation with the council of officers. But he heard daily of Ramona, without going to see her, at her own express desire, lest Stonehenge's irritation should revive; and she continued hovering on the verge of life and death.

The dreaded day came at last—the 20th of January. In the morning the commissioners met in the Painted Chamber, to prepare for the king's solemn arraignment at noonday.

At the head of the board sat the lord president, Bradshaw, in his black robes and ermine; and on each side sat the rest of the judges, to the number of fifty-six. Two or three who were aldermen wore their robes, the others were dressed chiefly in sad-coloured garments, the military only distinguished by wearing orange scarfs. Several divines were present, among whom was Peters; the lawyers of the prosecution, Cook, Aske, and Dorislaus; and several strangers, admitted by favour or interest. Among these was Stonehenge, who, with a face pale and livid as a leaden statue, but perfectly calm in appearance, stood retired between the deep Gothic windows.

The gloomy effect of the apartment was increased by the waving of the arras on the walls, representing in rusty fragments the wars of Troy; and uniting all things together, Ingulph almost imagined he was one of a supernatural assemblage.

"Methinks it shows but small respect to the augustness of this court," Bradshaw was saying with great pomp, "that my lord-general so seldom honours us with his company; and specially on this great occasion of our needing it."

"He hath a heavy charge on his hands; I pray your lordship, excuse it, but his love and good will are none the less," said Cromwell, with as much humility as if he were not speaking to a creature of his own making. "But as to urging matters so far back, it will be in your wisdom to decide whether we can find any reasonable proofs."

"Regarding the tyrannies and very barbarous dealings with the heir of the great family of De la Pole?" said Bradshaw. "Master Stonehenge averreth that the sister of that wronged gentleman was cajoled by Charles into a false marriage, with circumstances of hideous perfidy."

"And truly, seeing how besotted this people is, it were not ill to let them know all that can be known of him," said Harrison.

"Master Peters witnesseth to the false marriage," said Stonehenge, reverently bending.

"I married a pair of folks in masks, whom I afterwards learned were the now Marquis of Montacute and Lady Editha De la Pole," said Peters; "and by

this token, that Laud persecuted me to death's door and utter exile for it."

"We will not rake up dead men's ashes," said Cromwell. "You speak, I conclude, of the Knight of De la Pole, beheaded in James's time for high treason?"

"He was attainted—not beheaded," replied Dorislaus. "And surely his rebellion, if such it was, had as eminent justification as——but the major swallows the minor! If the people's accusation be made, all are included: there is no distinction."

"Neither needs it to rake the grave for the ashes of the Knight of De la Pole—the earl that should now be," said Stonehenge, stepping forward. "I am he."

"The gentleman is troubled with the lunes, 'tis known," said Cromwell, with a glance at the petrified Ingulph. "Be calm, sir, or you must leave the chamber."

"Nay, sirs, my person is well remembered—although too many of my old friends have gone—various ways," said Stonehenge, with melancholy composure. "Pym and Essex are dead!—Buckingham, Laud, and Strafford sleep in their bloody graves!—But many live who will testify."

"We trouble not at the particular wrongs of nobles," said Ireton, sternly. "We are here to judge in the people's cause; if the nobles are of it, 'tis well; but one head must serve all our turns."

"And now to our business," said Cromwell. "Yet I think we may safely leave the form and method of our proceedings to my lord president."

Bradshaw nodded authoritatively, and Cromwell gave a slight curling smile.

"But suppose his majesty should have the impudence to keep his hat on before us?" said Marten, with a lurking grimace.

"O' God's name, let him keep it on," replied Cromwell; "and our president doing the same, we shall abate no breath of our greatness; and for any other uncivil or presumptuous behaviour, Master Bradshaw will act his part without study."

"I trow me!" said Bradshaw, haughtily.

"And now, master solicitor, to read the indictment," began Cromwell, when Harrison interrupted him—

"Let us first seek a blessing on the work!" he said, in an ecstatic tone. "For verily I never felt my soul so full of light—nor received such comforting assurances—for now methinks the heavens are opening, and the glory of the Lord of Hosts, and the multitude of his angels with their golden harps, and the myriad myriads of his holy martyrs, are processioning down on earth to reign over his saints for ever."

This summons was instantly responded to, and the whole company knelt, and prayed for some time in rapturous silence, until Harrison burst forth into one of his usual rhapsodies. This threatened to last for some time, when suddenly three distinct blasts of signal trumpets, the first very remote, were heard in succession. "He is come, he is come!" exclaimed Cromwell, darting up, and rushing to the window alone; but he returned in a few minutes, looking of a deadly ashy tint.

"The people do greet him in silence, and stand uncovered!" he said, hurriedly.

"Oh, these citizens for half thirty pieces would sell the Lord again and again!" said Peters.

"My masters, now we are closing on this great work the nation will soon be full of," said Cromwell, recovering his firmness; "I desire ye to resolve what answer we shall give the king when he comes before us; for the first question he will ask us will be, by what authority and commission do we try him?"

There was a deep silence, which lasted for several minutes.

"In the name of the Commons, and parliament assembled, and all the good people of England!" said Marten.

"Then let us to the hall, and get it over," said Cromwell, rising, an example which was followed by the whole confabulation.

The guard immediately formed and preceded the court; but so engrossed were all men's minds, that none observed that Ingulph remained, as if in a state of stupefaction. The commissioners followed one another in order, and in a few moments the last of them disappeared in the descent.

The silence which followed seemed to startle Ingulph from his meditations; he arose, and advanced staggeringly towards Stonehenge, who had never stirred, but continued gazing at him with the cold glittering fascination of a serpent.

"Tell me, monster! tell me, devil!" he said, frantically; "are all your stories of my birth a fable of

yourself and your iniquitous partner, Tribulation, or is—is——."

"Here is your father's portrait," interrupted Stonehenge, calmly. "Press the spring of this ruby heart, and you behold him," he continued, drawing a ring from his finger.

Ingulph snatched it—pressed the spring—it flew open—and the features of a very young and handsome man appeared, exquisitely painted on enamel, scarcely the size of a pea.

"It is the king!" gasped Ingulph.

"It is your father!" returned Stonehenge. "This ring was the signal which obtained your mother's consent to the marriage in masks; she was my sister; Editha De la Pole!"

And ere the darkness which gathered over Ingulph's sight had cleared away, the miserable avenger disappeared.

His recollection returned in a few moments, like sensibility to a fractured limb; but not until probably the silence and lapse of time made a person who was concealed behind the arras imagine that he was gone. A figure in a long cloak and a slouched hat, which concealed his features in great measure, stepped out, and whether it was a reality or a vision of Ingulph's fevered senses, it appeared like the form of De la Pole. He sprung forward in a concentrated madness of passion which would in all probability have rendered the meeting fatal, but that at the moment Marten came running in, and the stranger either glided out, or disappeared.

"Come, come, Master Cromwell is looking fore and aft for you! What ails you, sir?" exclaimed Marten.

"Nothing," replied Ingulph, with supernatural firmness. "Since I am the destined avenger—since fate will have no other—sir, I follow you!"

## CHAPTER X.

"Did ever night or day show aught like this?"

DRYDEN.

STUNNING or attempting to stun his anguish with the recollection of his wrongs, and with the delusion of fatalism which had hitherto, of all the phantasies of that troubled age, been the most alien to his spirit, Ingulph found himself, he knew not how, in Westminster Hall.

The commissioners had already taken their seats on a series of raised benches, covered with scarlet cloth, which ascended nearly to the level of the great west window. Bradshaw sat foremost, on an elevated dais, in state, with two assistants on either hand, placed one degree lower. Beyond them was a space occupied only by a table with desks for two scribes, who sat solemnly, pen in hand. On the table were a sword and a mace surmounted by a crown lying crosswise—not unemblematical of the event about to take place. Beyond the table was an inclosed space, in the centre of which was a chair of crimson velvet for the king. On the right of this chair stood the counsel for the commonwealth. On the left was

a flight of stairs by which the king was to arrive, which was lined with soldiers.

Beyond the inclosure was another clear space, railed in, which finished the platform, which was raised several feet above the lower part of the hall. The people were to be admitted here without restraint, for the military dominators confided in the terror they had diffused, and desired to give the trial the appearance of a free and popular act. The more select spectators sat in galleries and scaffoldings erected round the court; and among these were numerous ladies, apparently of high rank from their dresses, but who all wore black vizards.

Directly opposite the king's chair, crowning the benches of the judges, shone a bright new shield, richly emblazoned with arms as yet unknown to heraldry—the arms of the commonwealth—not the least significant of signs. Cromwell and Marten sat on each side below the shield, the former apparently for the purpose of sitting as remote as possible from the observation of the king. He smiled with an expression of intense anxiety at Ingulph, and made him a place between himself and Marten.

There was a kind of murmured conversation for some minutes among the commissioners, and then Bradshaw, in a loud voice, commanded the doors to be opened, and the people to be admitted, whoever pleased, without exception. "'Tis most fit the people should see how their servants do the work they have put them to," said Cromwell.

"Are we eye-servants, then?" whispered Marten, but Cromwell turned disdainfully away.

In a moment the lower hall was flooded with a tumultuous crowd, pushing, struggling, fighting, and tumbling a way up to the bars, so that for some time the uproar and yells were deafening. Among these came Bulstocke and Lilly, stoutly battling their way to a foremost place. A great number of women intermingled, contributed their shrieks to the general hubbub; and Bradshaw had thrice thundered for silence, ere he was once heard. The application of the butt-ends of pikes stilled the more unruly, and the mob gradually calmed into something like order. But by far the greater part of the immense mass were obliged to content themselves with a remote view of the scene from the palace-yard, for the portals were left wide open.

"O, Lord, what a mercy is it to see this great city fall down before us!" said Peters, in an ecstacy of joy. "And what a stir is there to bring this great man to trial, without whose blood he will turn us all to blood, if he reign again!"

Silence was now obtained as well as commanded, and the Act constituting the court was read amidst profound attention. But if indeed established by the will of the people, it was strange to hear the deep hollow melancholy murmur which ran over the living masses like winds curling the sea in muttering waves.

The court was then called over, each commissioner rising in his place, as he was named. But an unlooked-for interruption occurred, even at this earliest stage of the proceedings. Lord Fairfax's name was the next after the president's, and when it was called,

a female voice in the galleries shrilly answered, "He has more wit than to be here!"

No notice beyond a general glance up was taken. Ingulph looked mechanically in the same direction, and saw a lady leaning resolutely forward in her seat, while the tremulous hand of another, and apparently a younger one, was laid on her arm as if to restrain her. Both were masked, but Ingulph knew so well the exact contour of that lovely form, that he saw —and saw without emotion!—that it was Lady De la Pole with Lady Fairfax.

The ceremony of calling over the court concluded, Bradshaw, in a lofty and authoritative manner, perhaps exaggerated to hide some inward faltering, commanded the serjeant-at-arms to bring the prisoner to the bar.

A short pause of deep silence followed, and then the renewed murmur of the multitude announced the king's approach. Preceded by a numerous guard, Charles descended the stairs into the hall, and was led by the serjeant-at-arms, with his mace, to the seat prepared for him. He gazed sternly at the court and galleries, and Ingulph thought that his eye dwelt for a moment upon him—and then seated himself, keeping his hat on, and paying no respect whatever to the court.

But after a moment's pause, he again rose, and turned round to the mass of spectators in the hall. The sight of their long-absent sovereign, whom almost all present remembered to have seen in the height of his grandeur, and prime of manhood, contrasted with his fallen condition, his worn and melan-

choly aspect, seemed to touch the hearts of the people. Sighs and broken exclamations of pity burst forth, in the midst of which Bulstocke loudly exclaimed, "God preserve your majesty!" and burst into tears.

"Even as we are all bound by a despised and trampled covenant!" groaned Tribulation, who stood not far behind.

The benignant smile which hovered on the king's lips was instantly checked; but he bowed courteously, and turned again to the court, a crier meantime yelling for silence.

In as calm and imperturbable a voice as if he had been in the habit of judging kings for years, Bradshaw opened the proceedings.

"Sir," he said, looking sternly at the monarch, "you are to know that the Commons of England assembled in Parliament, being deeply sensible of the calamities brought upon this nation, and of the innocent blood spilt in it, have resolved to make inquisition for this blood; and according to the debt they owe to God, to justice, the kingdom, and themselves, and according to the fundamental power and trust reposed in them by the people, other means failing through your default, have resolved to bring you to trial and judgment, and have therefore constituted this court of justice before which you now are, where you are to hear your charge, on which the court will proceed according to justice."

Cook now stepped forward with the charge in his hand, when the king touched him gently on the shoulder with his staff; and as he did not seem to observe him, slightly pushed him with it. Cook

turned testily round, and the golden head of the staff, which was a crown, fell suddenly off.

All present looked with visible interest, regarding the accident as ominous; and Charles, long accustomed to such deference, seemed to wait for some one to pick it up; but finding that no one did, he stooped for it himself, with an audible sigh.

Observing then that Cook hesitated whether to notice the king's interruption or not, Bradshaw sedately commanded him to proceed.

"My lord president," said Cook, continuing his advance—"I do hereby exhibit a charge of high treason and other crimes against Charles Stuart, King of England, in the name and presence of the people of England!"

The charge was now read, the king smiling contemptuously at various points, and laughing outright at the titles of traitor and murtherer, upon which justice was demanded against him.

"Sir, you have heard your charge," said Bradshaw, at the conclusion, "and find, in the close of it, the court prayed, in behalf of the commons of England, that you may answer; the court expects your answer."

"I would know by what power I am called hither," said the king. "I was not long since in the Isle of Wight; how I came there is a longer story than I think fit now to speak of; but there I entered into a treaty with both Houses, on as much public faith as is possible to be had of any people in the world. I treated there with a number of honourable lords and gentlemen, and treated honestly and

uprightly; I cannot say but they did very nobly with me; we were on a conclusion of the treaty. Now, I would know by what authority (I mean, lawful; there are many unlawful authorities, thieves and robbers, &c.) I was brought thence, and carried from place to place; and when I know this, I shall answer. Remember, I am your king, your lawful king; and what sins you bring on your heads, and the judgment of God on this land: think well on it, I say, think well on it, before you go further from one sin to a greater. Therefore. let me know by what *lawful* authority I am seated here, and I shall not be unwilling to answer. Meantime I shall not betray my trust; I have a trust committed to me by God, by old and lawful descent; I will not betray it in answering a new unlawful authority: therefore, resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me."

"If you had been pleased to observe what was hinted by the court at your first coming," said Bradshaw, with austere composure; "you would have known by what authority; which authority requires you, in the name of the people of England, whereof you are elected king, to answer."

"No, sir, I deny that!" said the king with warmth, at the word *elected.*

"If you acknowledge not the authority of the court—they must proceed!" said the president, emphatically.

"I tell them this!" said Charles, vehemently. "England was never an elective kingdom, but an hereditary one, for near one thousand years; therefore, let me know by what authority I am called

hither. I stand more for the liberty of my people than any here, who come to be my pretended judges: therefore, let me know by what lawful authority I am seated here, and I will answer it; otherwise, I *will not*."

"How royally you have managed your trust, is known!" said Bradshaw, sternly. "Your way of answer is to interrogate the court, which beseems you not in this condition; you have been told it twice or thrice."

"Here's a gentleman—Sir Ingulph Dethewarre," said the king, searching out Ingulph, and smiling as he recognised him what justly might be called a dagger, although full of kindness and pleased remembrance. "Ask him if he did not bring me from the Isle of Wight by force. I come not here as submitting to the court. I'll stand as much for the privilege of the House of Commons, rightly understood, as any one: I see no House of Lords here to constitute a parliament, which includes the king also. Is this bringing the king to his parliament? Is this bringing an end to the treaty in the public faith of the world? Let me see a legal authority, warranted by the scriptures, or the constitution of the kingdom, and I will answer."

"Sir, you have propounded a question, and have been answered," said Bradshaw, calmly. "Seeing you will not answer, the court will consider how to proceed. Meantime, those who brought you hither are to take charge of you back again; the court desires to know whether this is all the answer you will give?"

"Sir, I desire you would give me and all the world satisfaction in this," said Charles, very eagerly. "Let me tell you, 'tis not a slight thing you are about. I am sworn to keep the peace, by that duty I owe to God and my country, and I'll do it to the last breath in my body! Therefore, you will do well to satisfy first God, and then the country, by what authority ye do it! If you do it by an usurped authority, you cannot answer it! There is a God in heaven, who will call you and all who give you power to account! Satisfy me in that, and I will answer; otherwise I betray my trust, and the liberty of the people; therefore think of that, and then I shall be willing, for I avow it as great a sin to withstand lawful authority, as to submit to a tyrannical or other unlawful authority; and therefore satisfy God, me, and all the world of that, and you shall receive my answer. I am not afraid of yonder bill!"

"The court expects a final answer," replied Bradshaw. "They purpose to adjourn till Monday next. If you satisfy not yourself, though we tell you our authority, we are satisfied with our authority, which is on God's authority and the kingdom's: and the peace you speak of will be kept in doing justice, and that's our present work."

"For answer, let me tell you," said Charles, austerely; "you have shown no lawful authority to satisfy any reasonable man."

"That's in your apprehension; we are satisfied, who are your judges!" retorted Bradshaw.

"'Tis neither my apprehension, nor yours neither,

which ought to decide it!" returned Charles, haughtily.

"The court has heard, and you are to be disposed of as they have commanded," said Bradshaw, with supreme stateliness. "Guard, remove your prisoner!"

"Well, sir!" said the king, rising to obey—for the first time in his life!—and with a heart that swelled too full to admit of further reply, the dethroned monarch moved towards the stairs. But pausing and turning quickly round, he said, pointing to the sword on the table, "I do not fear that!" and retired amidst a great and contending uproar, the people shouting "God save the King!" and the soldiery crying "Justice! Justice!"

All this time Ingulph sat immoveably fixed; and even the general bustle and pressure of the dissolving assembly seemed not at all to disturb him. A familiar slap on the shoulder roused him from his trance, and looking up he dreamily discerned Master Peters.

"Here's a glorious beginning of the work!" he exclaimed, holding up his hands in ecstacy. "I cannot but look on this court with great reverence, for it doth resemble in some measure the trial that shall be at the end of the world by the saints."

Ingulph turned from him in silent loathing, and pushed his way recklessly into the crowd hurrying out at the portals.

## CHAPTER XI.

> "Ev'n thus in hell wander the restless damned;
> From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run;
> Then from their frosts to fires return again,
> And only prove variety of pain."
>
> ROWE.

FOR hours did Ingulph perambulate the streets without purpose, business, or interest of any sort; and yet afraid to trust himself with a moment's pause, lest the grim thought from which he fled should overwhelm him.

But he was mistaken. The immense masses that passed and repassed made no impression on his vision; he saw nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing. The one black idea darkened all others, and yet it lay shrouded in generality; he dared not look into it, dared not understand the full horror of his position. He blunted his mind—he would not allow it to pry—but still, still, the direful presence was there.

This then was the vengeance of Stonehenge—of the implacable madman—the seven times distilled essence of civil war—parricide! In vain Ingulph tried to awaken himself from the hideous dream.

But when memory, when consciousness, would return at last, he took refuge in desperate attempts to reckon up all the wrongs he had suffered, the direful

process by which he had been compelled to his task. He called up a thousand circumstances to prove to himself that Charles had always known of his relationship to himself, and had willingly sacrificed him all along to his pride and monstrous want of mere human feeling. All the wrongs he had received from the Montacutes, were therefore to be counted against him. He remembered with a strange satisfaction the apparently bitter wrongs of his mother—the stupendous injuries which had overthrown the noble mind of Stonehenge. Was he to blame that destiny had blindly selected him to work out her ends?

Laying these anodynes perpetually to his burning soul, exasperating his own wounds by every artifice, he baffled for awhile the clutches of despair. But he felt that he must finally yield, and become—perhaps, a madman.

The day after the arraignment was Sunday, and Ingulph spent it roaming about the city, seeking for some strengthening to his only supporting thoughts, the justice of the king's punishment, and on the contrary, for hopes that it could not be executed, in defiance of the popular will. But every man seemed wrapped in a mist of his own terrors, and refused all communion with his fellows, fearing even to trust his eyes with the secrets of his soul. The very topers in the alehouses, usually so vociferous and absolute, sat drinking in silence.

Consolation awaited Ingulph nowhere. In the churches, which were mostly occupied by the presbyterians, some preachers only hurried over a few unmeaning prayers, as if they did not even dare to

beseech heaven intelligibly. The sighs and fearful murmurs of the auditory only filled the space. Others more daring and conscientious declaimed furiously on the covenant, and in favour of the king's inviolability; and to incline the people in the cause, represented the king in the most affecting lights, betrayed, fallen, repentant; until Ingulph rushed from them to the conventicles, where he was certain to hear nought but raging invectives against the monarch, and fearful pictures of his tyrannies, and loud demands for his blood in satisfaction for the torrents poured over the nation.

Yet he went apparently through his duties—in fact, made them the pretext of his non-appearance with the court on the king's second appearance before it, alleging the dangerous excitement of the citizens, and the necessity of keeping a continual watch over their movements. Charles again appeared at the bar of the High Court—and again solemnly denied its jurisdiction. The ferment and violence of the opposing parties increased; the royalists openly raged, the presbyterians began to take courage; the independents loudly announced their determination not to rest content with any sacrifice less than that of the great delinquent. Meanwhile the intentions of the leaders of the army could only be guessed at; but very few really dreamed that they projected the tremendous result.

Returning from visiting some of his posts, Ingulph found, on the evening after this second appearance, that a soldier of Fairfax's had arrived, with what he concluded to be orders from head-quarters. But

to his surprise, and undoubtedly unknown to the messenger himself, it was a letter without a signature, but the handwriting of which was perfectly familiar to him. The note contained these words:—

"If you would save your soul from the guilt of murther and parricide, be at the Painted Chamber, to-morrow, on the king's third appearance, and a messenger will guide you to the presence of one who may have lost all claim on your tenderness, but not on your humanity."

The sight of the fair, tremulous character awakened pangs in Ingulph's heart which he had hoped were silenced for ever. But he resolved hurriedly to take no notice of the epistle. A parricide!—a parricide!—he, whose only experience of the relationship necessary to make such a criminal was an undeviating course of oppression or neglect! Was it in humanity not to rebel against an order of things which had crushed all the noblest feelings of his nature—all its most generous impulses—all its purest, warmest, holiest principles?

He flung the letter on the ground—he even trampled on it in his fury—but he picked it up again. The image of that fair and melancholy face, its expression of unutterable grief, the lowliness of the claims urged on his consideration, sunk mournfully as a distant strain of funereal music on his soul. A parricide!—and what was she to labour thus earnestly in the cause of the man by whose word, not uttered, her father bled on the scaffold! He would at least see her to tell her that!—to reproach her with all her former attempts to ensnare him, to up-

braid her with the marvellous cruelty that had coldly sacrificed a heart which had been so blindly devoted to her, to the loss of all but honour!

Whatever was the mental process by which it was accomplished, on the third day of the arraignment Ingulph joined the court, which was sitting when he arrived. Cromwell remarked his haggard look, but he inquired not the reason, for his own bore testimony to severe mental suffering.

The court was more numerous on this occasion than on any former one, and the king was brought in with the usual state and solemnity. But this time Ingulph was convinced it was not the work of his imagination. The king gazed at him with a mournful intensity which nearly vanquished his acquired stoicism; but observing that Ingulph refused to meet his eye, the austere melancholy of his countenance returned, and he withdrew it.

"May it please your lordship," said the determined Cook, immediately after silence was obtained; "'tis now the third time that, by the great favour of this high court, the prisoner has been brought to the bar without joining issue. At the first, I exhibited a charge against him of the highest treason ever acted on the theatre of England; that a king, trusted and sworn to keep the law, and who had tribute paid for that end, should be guilty of a wicked design to subvert our laws, and introduce a tyrannical government, in defiance of the parliament; set up his standard for war against parliament and people: and I humbly prayed, in behalf of the people of England, that he might speedily be required to answer

this charge: but, my lord, instead of answering, he disputed the authority of this high court. Your lordship was pleased to give him a farther day, which being yesterday, I humbly moved he might be required to give a direct answer, either by denying or confessing it, when he was pleased to demur to the jurisdiction of the court, which being overruled, he was commanded to give a positive answer: I, therefore, now humbly move for speedy judgment against him. I might press your lordship on the whole, that, according to the known rules of law, if a prisoner stand contumacious in contempt, and put not in an issuable plea, guilty or not guilty, it may be taken *pro confesso*, as it has been done to those who deserved more favour than the prisoner at the bar. But, besides, I shall humbly press your lordship on the whole fact: the House of Commons, the supreme authority of the kingdom, have declared it notorious that the matter of the charge is true, as 'tis in truth as clear as crystal, and as the sun which shines at noonday; which if your lordship and the court be not satisfied in, I have, on the people of England's behalf, several witnesses to produce. I, therefore, humbly pray, (or rather the innocent blood shed cries!) that speedy judgment be pronounced against the prisoner at the bar."

"Sir, you have heard what has been moved by the counsel on behalf of the kingdom against you," said Bradshaw; "you may well remember, and if you do not, the court cannot forget what dilatory dealings they have found at your hands. You were pleased to propound some questions; you had our

resolutions on them. You were told over and over, that the court affirmed their own jurisdiction; that 'twas not for you, nor any other, to dispute the jurisdiction of the highest authority of England, from which there is no appeal, and touching which there must be no dispute; yet you persisted in such carriage, as you gave no manner of obedience, nor did you acknowledge any authority in them, nor the high court which constituted this court of justice.

"Sir, I must let you know from the court that they are sensible of these delays, and that they ought not, being authorized by the supreme court of England, to be thus trifled withal; and that they might, if they pleased, according to the rules of justice, take advantage of these delays, and proceed to pronounce judgment against you: yet they are pleased to give direction, and on their behalf I require you, to make a positive answer to this charge against you, sir, in plain terms, for justice knows no respect of persons; you are to give your positive and final answer, in plain English, whether you be guilty or not guilty of these treasons laid to your charge."

There was a slight pause, during which the king seemed lost in a perplexed meditation, for the determined and inveterate tone of the president struck all present.

"When I was here yesterday," he said at last; "I desired to speak for the liberties of the people of England; I was interrupted; I desire to know yet whether I may speak freely or no?"

"Sir, you have had the resolution of the court, on the like question," said Bradshaw, with lofty composure. "The court have determined that you ought to answer the charge."

"I will answer the charge when I know by what authority you do this," returned the king.

"If that be all you will say, then, gentlemen, you who brought the prisoner hither, take charge of him back again!" replied the unshaken president.

"I require that I may give my reasons why I do not answer, and give me time for that," said Charles, somewhat perplexedly.

"Sir, 'tis not for prisoners to require!" said Bradshaw, haughtily.

"Prisoners!" exclaimed Charles, with sudden vivacity. "Sir, I am not an ordinary prisoner."

"The court has considered of their jurisdiction," replied the president; "and they have already affirmed their jurisdiction; if you will not answer, we will give order to record your default."

"You never heard my reasons yet!" said the king, with a degree of melancholy in his tone which sounded like the farewell to some secret hope in his bosom.

"Sir, your reasons are not to be heard against the highest jurisdiction!" returned the unalterable Bradshaw.

"Show me that jurisdiction where reason is not to be heard!" retorted the monarch, and a general murmur of approbation, pointing the sarcasm, filled the hall.

"Sir, we show it you here, the Commons of Eng-

land," replied Bradshaw, hushing the clamour with an imperious wave of the hand.

"For the charge, I value it not a rush!" said Charles, contemptuously imitating the gesture. "'Tis the liberty of the people I stand for. For me to acknowledge a new court, which I never heard of before—I that am your king, who should be an example to all the people of England, to uphold justice, to maintain the old laws—indeed I do not know how to do it! You spoke very well the first day I came here, of the obligations laid on me by God, to maintain the liberties of my people; the same obligation you spoke of I acknowledge I owe to God, and my people, viz., to defend as much as in me lies the ancient laws of the kingdom: therefore, till I may know that this is not against the fundamental laws of the kingdom, by your favour, I can put in no particular answer. If you will give me time, I will show my reasons why I cannot do it; and thus—"

"Sir," interrupted Bradshaw, with asperity.

"By your favour, you ought not to interrupt me," continued the king, very eagerly—what a change from the times when no man dared! "How I came here, I know not; there is no law for it, to make your king your prisoner. I was in a treaty on the public faith of the kingdom, that was the known two houses of parliament, that was the representative of the kingdom; and when I had almost made an end of the treaty, then I was hurried away and brought hither, and therefore—"

"Sir, you must know the pleasure of the court!" said Bradshaw, again breaking impatiently in.

"By your favour, sir!" exclaimed the king.

"Nay, sir, by your favour, you may not be permitted to fall into these discourses!" said the lord president. "You appear as a delinquent—you have not acknowledged the authority of the court; the court craves it not of you; but once more they command you to give your positive answer. Clerk, do your duty."

The clerk in a wavering voice read the paper, calling upon the king to return a direct answer to his accusation.

"Sir, I say again to you," replied Charles with calm resolution; "so that I might give satisfaction to the people of England of the clearness of my proceedings, not by way of answer, not in this way, but to satisfy them that I have done nothing against the trust committed to me, I would do it; but to acknowledge a new court against their privilege, to alter the fundamental laws of the kingdom—sir, you must excuse me."

"Sir," returned the lord president; "this is the third time you have publicly disowned this court, and put an affront on it; how far you have preserved the privileges of the people, your actions have spoken; and truly, sir, men's intentions ought to be known by their actions; you have written your meaning in bloody characters throughout the whole kingdom; but, sir, you understand the pleasure of the court—clerk, record the default—and, gentle-

men, you who took charge of the prisoner, take him back again."

"I will say this one word more to you," said Charles, vehemently. "If 'twere my own particular, I would say no more, nor interrupt you."

"Sir, you have heard the pleasure of the court!" returned Bradshaw. "And, though you will not understand it, you are to find that you are before a court of justice! The next time you are brought, you will know more of the pleasure of the court, and it may be, their final determination."

"Show me wherever the House of Commons were a court of judicature of that kind!" exclaimed Charles, with passionate warmth.

"Serjeant, take away the prisoner," said Bradshaw, without deigning a reply.

The king looked at him earnestly for a moment, while his heart swelled full of the bitter sentiment of his degraded majesty. Those who were near heard him sigh, and murmur, "Poor Strafford!" in a deep under-tone. "Well, sir," he continued, turning away with melancholy submission; "remember that the king is not suffered to give in his reasons for the liberty and freedom of all his subjects."

"Sir, you are not to have liberty to use this language," said Bradshaw, with great austerity. "How great a friend you have been to the laws and liberties of the people, let all England and the world judge!"

"Sir, under favour!" said the king, turning suddenly among his guards who were assembling with their tasselled partizans around him. "'Twas the liberty, freedom, and laws of the subject which I

undertook to defend with arms! I never took arms against the people—but for the laws!"

This direct affirmation of the contrary of even the principle of the presbyterian treaty of Newport, would at one time have offended the people; but now compassion had blinded them to every thing but the sovereign's miseries. No dissent followed among the multitude, and after waiting for an instant in expectation of some, the president arose, and coldly observed, "The command of the court must be obeyed—no answer will be given to the charge."

The king merely observed, "Well, sir," and withdrew amidst his guards and the mournful silence of the people.

## CHAPTER XII.

"Such murmur filled
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the sea."

MILTON.

LOST in a kind of waking dream, Ingulph accompanied his fellow-commissioners into the Painted Chamber, to consult on what was to follow this continued recusancy.

"You see he refuses to answer; he denies our authority, and it will be the same to the end of the chapter!" said Ireton.

"And the end of the chapter—what is that?" said Cromwell, gloomily. "Let such of you speak as have resolved minds; for my part, I am betossed on a sea of perplexities."

"On his continued recusancy, and declining of the authority of the court, sentence of course," said Bradshaw, seemingly surprised at the question.

"Ay, sentence; but what sentence?" said Cromwell, with a start.

"What sentence can be passed when the king refuses to plead to our authority?" said Ingulph, in a low voice, as if ashamed of his own infirmity.

"And compares it to that of banditti and robbers!" said Cromwell, sharply. "But if to deny the authority at whose bar we stand be sufficient excuse, the atheist is safer than any of us, and all the holiest saints of the Lord!—But in truth, 'tis sad to see a man so fallen, and to think of what we may all come to!—Yet there is great consolation in the army's letters to us, from all parts, commending our humble walking in slippery places, and inciting us to finish the work! To finish, ay,—to finish!"

"We must affirm our authority, or abandon it; and then what a shameful Italian stage-play buffoonery have we enacted before the world!" said Bradshaw. "A farce that will only be tragical in the conclusion, for all our heads are in it."

"Which puts me in mind," said Harrison, abruptly; "that we should take order concerning the ungodly papistries in Drury Lane and Blackfriars! I do hear how last night they must needs play Master William Shakspere's play of Henry VI., or some such mad trumpery; and abundance of people went weeping away, the less for the king that was than the king that is."

"Hast thou never a word to say for the poor players, that wert once so like to take to a rantipole life among them?" said Cromwell, looking over at Ingulph with a quaint smile. "Well, let them turn the ribald rogues adrift, that will not leave nature to her own pravity, but must needs teach her worse tricks than she takes to of her own bent.—But what doth this fellow here?" he continued, observing with surprise the figure of the astrologer, Lilly, who was

listening with infinite curiosity, and an awkward affectation of distant respect.

"I do seek but Master Dethewarre, on a matter he wots of, please your honourable honours," said Lilly, with an anxious look of intelligence at Ingulph.

"With me?" repeated Ingulph; but the recollection suddenly flashed upon him of the mysterious billet, and he added, "Ay, truly, I have some business with him."

"Master Lilly," said Cromwell, turning abruptly to the astrologer; "what is that stuff you prate in your last 'Starry Messenger?' Hath it a meaning?"

"Concerning the fiery trygon, or that dismal sign of the dragon's tail in the tenth?" replied the astrologer.

"What man is that you speak of," said Cromwell, with an inquisitive gaze; "whereof you say that he is not far from attaining an excess in dominion and sovereignty? Surely you must now acknowledge that your stars have lied?"

"If so, let them bear the shame, for I have not belied them," replied the astrologer, with a keen glance at the renowned general. "But where have I said—what man—or when he comes? Perchance to-morrow, perchance not for centuries of years! The good man, if he be born, (have I said,) sleeps quietly, until that angel appointed for his guardian, excite him in a moment to rouse on his meditating thoughts, and to convert consultation into action!"

"The dragon?" said Harrison, who had been musing ever since that word was pronounced.

"There is one mentioned, 12th Revelations, that gave unto the beast his power, and throne, and authority; but truly this is a prophecy which I hope not to see fulfilled in my time."

"Our times are not of our own appointment, brother Harrison, nor measuring," said Cromwell, sharply. "But meanwhile how hard is this gentle yoke on these uncurbed necks! What divinity is there in this man that men should shake and tremble in his presence; that the children of light should stand as it were rebuked before the children of darkness? Yet verily he speaks not ill for a king, and I did not hear him stammer once."

"His father was a wise man," said Ireton, bitterly. "Were they not wont to call him Solomon? And truly men said he was the son of David—Rizzio."

"He says he rules us by hereditary descent from the Norman kings," said Cromwell, without apparently noticing this gibe, though nearly all the grave personages present smiled. "If so, they won the throne by conquest—and what conquest gave—conquest can take away."

"I trow, for the most part, our names here are Saxon as the laws of Alfred!" said Ireton. "Well, we Saxons then have conquered back our liberties, and now 'tis time to pay off our oppressors for six hundred years of slavery."

"Strip him, the king, of the royal majesty," said Ingulph, hurriedly; "and he will be of no more account in the people's eyes, than a glow-worm when the daylight makes it a slimy worm that was a gem in darkness."

"It is impossible!" said Cromwell, hastily. "Jests will not strip from him the glory of his renowned ancestry—the antique kings whose crowned heads vanish in the mist of the past, beyond the ken of history."

"Tut, there are Welchmen who remember his ancestors stewards and butlers!" said Ireton, laughing at this imaginative view. "But if it be so, the more reason for us to make altogether a new order of things—a new sovereignty of a dynasty the oldest in the world—the people."

"The people! mean you of those in the city?" said Cromwell, hastily. "How speak they, Master Dethewarre?"

"Even with silence!" replied Ingulph.

"And deem you there will be much chattering and gossiping and shaking of hands at the latter day?" said Harrison. "Or shall not terror sit palely on all men's cheeks as the shadow of the presence of death, when they press multitudinously, as the waves and sands of the sea, to the judgment-seat?"

"Why should we make this distinction? Is God a respecter of persons?" said Cook. "If any other prisoner refused to plead, my lords, the judges would send him to the press; but, indeed, to stand mute is a confession in law."

"And in universal equity," said Dorislaus.

"Master Lilly, you may retire," said Ireton, emphatically.

"I do but wait to know Colonel Dethewarre's pleasure," said Lilly, with a sly look at Ingulph.

"Whether he will be pleased to have his question in the mathematics resolved at my house, at eight o'clock this evening, when there is a conjunction of Saturn and Venus—or wait for another opportunity—which may never come!"

"I will visit you then, Lilly," replied the young colonel, with an intelligent nod; and the astrologer, bending to the roses on his shoes, made his exit.

"Is it your pleasures then we proceed at once to sentence?" said Bradshaw.

"No, no, not at once, we will pause, we will reflect!" said Cromwell, hastily. "We will not be hurried in this weighty matter! Let us wait on the Lord to know his will!—and hear what the people say, and the army, and the world! 'Tis, I say, a mighty matter! Never before — never again — for future times can but imitate—will men have so vast an enterprise on hand!"

"And, meanwhile, we shall have a new rebellion —or a cavalier sword running swift and deep over our throats by night!" said Ireton. "And what will the soldiers say? — Ha, Master Dethewarre! what will the agitators say, whom you have taught so well what to ask?"

"But a sentence—you speak of a sentence!" said Cromwell, after looking in vain at Ingulph for a reply. "Yes, yes, I know what the soldier would have!—But the sentence!—what sentence?—I speak as a blunt soldier, unlearned in laws—should amount at least to . . deposition?"

He glanced anxiously around the table, and the expression of disappointment was predominant on

almost every countenance but Ingulph's, which lighted up.

"What for have we bound the bull to the altar, and poured oil and frankincense on his horns, if we are not to sacrifice him?" said Harrison.

"Let us not become a mockery and a by-word," said Ireton, passionately. "Let us either set up the throne again on our necks, or make it so slippery with blood that no man shall ever dare to mount it again!"

"Tut!—what fear will ever scare a man from mounting a throne, if he can but get a foot on it?" said Cromwell, hastily. "This man hath a son ready to snatch his crown, as it rolls from the scaffold!—And remember, remember, the Valley of Salt, where Amaziah, being restored in Judah, slew ten thousand of his father's slayers!"

"Fear ye not!—no king of the line of Stuart shall ever again sit on the throne of this chosen land!" said Harrison, in a tone of prophetic solemnity.

"Why then the sentence—if we sentence at all—must needs be—death!" said Cromwell. "But," he added hastily; "we must convince all the world of our justice; we must hear the evidence; and that will give time to think more ripely on this matter."

No one objected to this reasonable proposition, and the assembly arose with one accord.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between.
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once has been."

COLERIDGE.

To describe the emotions with which, as the hour assigned him drew nigh, Ingulph hastened to keep his appointment, would be a vain task, so rapid and contending were they. He was at Lilly's house some minutes before the time. It was in the Strand, a corner house on the bridge; a large but somewhat decayed building, although the learned proprietor was at the period—during a short interval—for he rarely suffered the place in his affections to be long unoccupied—a widower.

Knocking at the door, Lilly himself opened it very quick and stealthily, apologising for assuming the office of porter by casually mentioning that two of his maid-servants were dead of the plague. Ingulph scarcely noticed what he said, but followed him along a passage in which were ranged a number of odoriferous plants in red flower-pots, of fantastic

shapes, and entered the sanctum in which the sage usually received his visitors. These deluded individuals, who were of all ranks and politics, and from whose babblings, much more than from the stars, Lilly gathered his knowledge, were of course unwilling to be recognised. Darkness also suited many of the sage's operations, and consequently the windows of the chamber were bricked up.

A pale blue light burned in a crocodile's mouth suspended from the ceiling, and diffused a ghastly radiance below, on various objects well calculated to inspire awe and credulity into the beholder. Astrolabes, globes, and other mathematical instruments were scattered about, apparently under the guardianship of two Egyptian mummies, whose red glass eyes sparkled very strangely, while fragments of their winding-sheets and papyri were studiously unrolled, as if for the philosopher's perusal. A large mirror, with a black crape veil over it, filled one circular panel in the wall; and the whole ceiling was painted, or rather emblazoned, with the fantastic configuration of the stars on the celestial globe.

Lilly, who perhaps did not desire to enter into conversation with a scholar on the mystic adornments of his chamber, retired instantly to await, as he said, the arrival of the lady. He mentioned no name, and Ingulph was left to his own meditations. But not for long; he heard the street-door open, and a voice, whose every tone made his heart leap, answered in a low hurried manner to some observation of Lilly's—"I do not fear the plague, nor aught else!—Is he here?"

Ingulph distinguished not the reply, but the door opened, and Lilly entered, ceremoniously escorting a lady in a mantle and hood which completely enveloped her person.

"Were you musing on the strange conjunction of Mars and Saturn, you could hardly be more profoundly at it, Master Dethewarre," said Lilly, facetiously, remarking the motionless attitude and agitated countenance of Ingulph.

"Leave us for—for a few moments," said the lady, who was the first to recover her self-possession. "We must confer—this gentleman and I—alone—ere we tax your skill. Meanwhile see if there be aught worthy your notice in this net."

"You may confide in me, madam," said Lilly, pocketing the purse with his characteristic affectation of indifference. "In truth, I never wished his majesty ill, although the court hounded George Wharton on against me; but my stars spoke the truth, whereas his on the court side were the liars time has proved him."

Marie smiled with a perturbed and absent expression, and an impatient movement of the hand, which Lilly took as a hint, and withdrew, with a long, prying gaze at Ingulph.

"Colonel Dethewarre!—pardon me, you must needs hate me—but at this distance—he may have some listening-place!" and she advanced a few steps towards him; but observing that he stood rooted to the spot, with his arms folded, and with a stern and apparently unmoved look, she threw herself into a chair, and tossed her hood hastily back as if for air,

revealing that once richly tinted, and still exquisitely beautiful face, but now pale as snow, and full of anguish in the expression.

There was a moment's silence.

"You have then forgotten me?" she said, with extreme mournfulness, and covering her face with her hands she sank in a passion of grief and tears on the table before her. All the pride and wrath of Ingulph's heart died away at the sight, and the next instant he was kneeling at her feet—had snatched her hand, and covered it with ravening kisses.

"Thou dost not hate me then, I that have so cruelly betrayed thee?" she said, still weeping. "But do not, do not believe that ever my heart has been for one moment false to its first—its last—affection. Say that you do not hate me, Ingulph!"

"Hate you, Marie! You are the wife of another," said Ingulph, suddenly springing up; and clenching his hands, he pressed them against his brow in agony.

"Truly, truly, I have not forgotten!" she muttered, distractedly. "But, Ingulph, even that tie—oh! is there any so sacred as that between parent and child,—the first of all? You know what I would say—the king too knows all. You will not slay your father, Ingulph! You will not put the fiendish climax on this unnatural war, by making its last act parricide? for then, indeed, the heavens will be weary of us, and bid the sea, which rages around our island, gulf us below the mariner's sounding!"

"I am the slave and instrument of destiny; my

will matters nothing," said Ingulph, with the gloomy stubbornness of despair.

"Do not feign to believe it, Ingulph!" returned Marie, with passionate earnestness. "Let not this false illusion of necessity make you a sharer in the solemn murther of your king and father. Oh, though we do not punish parricide as I have heard them say the old world did, by putting the wretch into a roomy chest, and throwing him into the sea, that he might stifle gradually—know this, that the whole universe shall be your prison-chest, and all the air between sky and earth shall not be sufficient to prevent your suffocation, for your own heart will do it!"

"He betrayed my mother—he has bathed my country in her own blood—he has banished Stonehenge—he reared me in scorn and disownment—his nobles have trampled me—his minions added dishonour and madness to my name—he has forced you into the arms of the wretch who heaped the ignominy of his own crimes on me;—if he lives, the liberty for which we have bled is gone for ever—the illustrious republic we project is but a splendid dream! And would you have me now turn royalist?" said Ingulph, with torrent-like impetuosity.

"Alas! and is the king answerable for all these evil works of men whom his misfortunes compel him to trust?" said Marie; "but for these private injuries of your own which you allege—read this paper—and know too that the king acknowledges you—that Montacute and his son surrender to you the

earldom and lands which were your mother's right on her brother's attainder."

Ingulph mechanically took a paper which the lady drew from her mantle, but observing that he glanced at it as if unable or unwilling to peruse it, she read it aloud for him as he held it.

The first part was in the handwriting of the Marquis of Montacute, and signed by him. It was addressed to the king, and after many humble entreaties for pardon, and assurances that only the excessive desire which he had of contributing to his majesty's safety made him resolve to divulge a matter in which the writer was so highly to blame, he proceeded in a document which from its style and matter might well be called a confession.

It began by reminding the king of his early friendship with the Knight of De la Pole, and his youthful passion for the Lady Editha, which his generosity and honour had always kept within the limits of discretion, notwithstanding the corrupt example and exhortations of the Duke of Buckingham, and the persons whom he placed around him after the duke's accession to his royal favour, among whom the marquis—the impoverished cadet of a noble house—was compelled to be a principal instrument. The depth and purity of the prince's attachment inspired the confederacy with great alarm, lest it should be the mean of riveting the ascendancy of the severe reformer and puritan, the Knight of De la Pole. At the instigation of these profligate courtiers, and induced by revenge for injuries which he had received from the knight, in consequence of an intrigue into

which he had unfortunately been led with a distant relative of the knight's low-born mother—the marquis confessed he had been prevailed on to breathe those injurious suspicions on the lady's honour, which induced the prince to imagine he did no great wrong in redoubling his attentions, on ideas differing from that which the ambitious knight and his innocent sister had long cherished.

In continuation, the marquis declared that he was touched with remorse at the progress in this nefarious plan; moreover, entertaining a passionate attachment to the lady herself—and being the next heir, failing her brother and herself, to the De la Pole possessions, and it was very improbable that, absorbed as he was in grand political projects, the knight would ever marry—he pleaded guilty to a double deceit in having persuaded the prince that he could prevail on the Lady Editha to visit him privately at Whitehall, and with having used the ring which he gave him as a token, to persuade her that he was commissioned to propose a private marriage between them—by night—in masks—to be performed by a priest who was not to know the rank of either party. Resembling the prince in stature, and befriended by the darkness and his disguise, the marquis personated the prince, and as such married the unhappy lady, hoping that as he had only darkened her reputation with relation to himself, when she found the knot was irrevocably tied, she would submit to her destiny.

But he was mistaken, for when, after the ceremony, he revealed himself, and all he had done,

imagining that she would thus perceive herself to be absolutely in his power, revenge and despair took possession of her soul. After the first paroxysm, she feigned resignation, desired only time to recover from the shock, and to reconcile her brother, who detested and despised her surreptitious bridegroom, to the match—and then secretly fled to the prince. He was then very young, surrounded by a profligate household, tutored by the voluptuous Buckingham, — and she altogether concealed her forced marriage.

The marquis with infinite sorrow and repentance confessed, that after this elopement was known, he himself became animated by a spirit of revenge which resembled madness. Else what could have prevailed upon him but delirium, to inform the Knight of De la Pole—as if in repentance and remorse—that the sham marriage was a preconcerted affair between himself and the prince? He should ever deplore the wild excesses into which this news hurried the Knight of De la Pole, and which ended in his attainder. He should ever thankfully acknowledge the prince's piety and integrity, that the moment he discovered what had happened, and received the injunctions of the late archbishop, Laud, to that effect, he submitted to the laws, and the commands of his father, and separated from the society of the unhappy wife. His highness shortly after going abroad on his Spanish expedition, the marquis obtained the custody of his lady's person, and with gratitude acknowledged that her claim to the title of De la Pole, and his own as her husband,

were graciously merged in the more exalted title conferred by a marquisate.

Nevertheless, so extreme was the dislike which the lady unhappily cherished to her husband, that she would never be in the same apartment with him, nor endure his presence even at her table, without paroxysms of grief and rage which threatened her life. In hope that time and gentle treatment might overcome this aversion, the marquis had her carefully lodged and attended in the castle of De la Pole. And now, the confessionist acknowledged with extreme sorrow, he came to the most blameable part of his conduct. The marchioness perished, giving birth to a son to the prince; but aware that, under the circumstances, the laws would adjudge the succession of the marquis to it, and thus deprive his own offspring of a great inheritance, he had wickedly and wrongfully concealed the boy's real birth, and brought it up remotely as the child of Tribulation Dethewarre. But now, stung in conscience, and in the hope to contribute to his majesty's preservation, he threw himself on his royal pity in this full avowal, and resigned into his hands the earldom and lands of De la Pole.

This extraordinary confession was followed by a sorrowful postscript in the king's own hand, acknowledging belief in the general truth of the facts alleged, and restoring Ingulph to his mother's title and possessions.

"Well, well, well! — 'tis very well!" said Ingulph, wildly, at the conclusion. "But what avails all this?—Say you have cheated me of the founda-

tion of all my wrongs! What do I owe?—Nothing but life!—A dagger's point can rid me of that debt! —Are you not the forced wife of the worthy imitator of his monstrous father—of De la Pole!"

"No, no—I consented, I consented!—I that kneel to you now for forgiveness and pity!" said Marie, throwing herself at his feet. "The queen's importunities—the prince's foolish passion for me—the villanous light in which you were made to appear—the king's anxiety to preserve me as he thought from an unequal marriage—his love for the memory of my father—your furious zeal against him;—put yourself in his place—and be merciful, be human!"

"Ay, there it speaks, even in your voice, the hideous tyranny which we have overthrown, and will crush!" said Ingulph. "I pray you, what reality is there in these accursed distinctions of blood, when he himself regarded his own as base, because it had not the slimy gild of rank on the surface!"

"But blame not the king for wedding me to De la Pole!" said Marie, eagerly. "It was my own deed!—I thought you were the falsest of men—a seducer under the holiest guise! And you remember—you remember," she added, with a wavering blush;—"when I did all but—but throw myself—when I avowed to you—yes, yes, cost what it will, I must needs say it—you did virtually reject me, when you rejected my conditions."

"All matters nothing now—you are the wife of De la Pole," replied Ingulph, in a tone of exceeding bitterness.

"Ah, if you knew *all!*" said Marie, passionately, and flushing between snow and crimson in rapid alternations. "It was the king—it was the king—who, on the discovery in Oxford, supported me in my resolution—obtained for me—that I might—retire to France with the queen! Ingulph, by all that is sacred, I am only De la Pole's wife in name!—I never will be! It is my fixed resolve, were the good king but saved from his merciless enemies, to enter the convent of the blessed sisters of Carmel in which I have long sojourned—for ever!"

"But, De la Pole's wife in name!" exclaimed Ingulph, gazing in an agony of doubt and joy at the youthful woman whose eye met his unblenchingly, although her cheek, neck, and bosom seemed to glow with fire.

"I swear it!" she repeated. "On the day of the marriage I accompanied the queen to Bristol, thence to France, and I have never spoken to De la Pole since but in the presence of many."

But her words were broken short, for as she spoke, she was clasped in Ingulph's embrace, and covered with his burning kisses, while tears and sighs choked all utterance between them. A slight knock was heard at the minute, and both listened for a brief pause, as if expecting the entrance of the astrologer. No one appeared.

"But, Ingulph—dearest Ingulph! I *am* his wife, in name!" she said at last, gently disengaging herself from his arms, with a smile of mingled anguish and supplication. "But, now! have you any injuries left which only parricide can fitly avenge?"

"How know you, Marie, that we—they intend the king's death?" said Ingulph, in a bewildered tone.

"The king knows but too well their intention," said Marie. "A letter from him formerly fell into their hands, which—they will not trust him—they will butcher him! His crown will not content them; they must have his gracious head with it."

"They will not—they dare not—they shall not touch his head!" exclaimed the conscience-stricken republican.

"Then aid us in our attempt to rescue him from their murtherous clutches!" said Marie; "else his doom is determined, for all their fair words to keep the bloodhounds in hand, until the deer is brought to bay."

"What attempt?—Thank God! I can die ere they shall harm one hair of his head!" said Ingulph, distractedly pacing the chamber.

"Hear me, then, dear Ingulph, hear me patiently," returned the beautiful royalist. "Under pretext of yielding to the Parliament, De la Pole's loyal crew have brought his vessel to Gravesend; but Montacute is on board, and secretly commands it.—The king is lodged at Sir Robert Cotton's house; the distance is very short between it and Whitehall. If you could obtain command of the guard, but for one night, which surely as 'tis changed so frequently you might—the king's evasion might easily be contrived, with the assistance of De la Pole and some other faithful gentlemen. It were not then difficult to reach the vessel, and sail for France, with such start as your silence would afford."

Hazardous to the last degree as this complot undoubtedly was, the point which least struck Ingulph was the danger.

"I understand you!" he said, bitterly. "The glory and renown of saving the king are to be De la Pole's, and for his reward you—yes, I understand you!"

"And for his reward—I leave it to his grateful and generous sovereign!" said Marie. "But you speak of none for yourself!—If it be any that I should stay with you and be your slave—since I cannot be your wife—such is my intent, if you will it, and welcome all shame, poverty, and woe, rather than all the pomps and glories of the world remote from you!"

Ingulph was too much moved for a moment to reply; but forcing himself to some outward composure, he said tremulously, "No, my beloved Marie! rather will I die many times than calumny should ever breathe on thy sweet name! I need no motive to urge to the king's deliverance; most happy if I find my own destruction in it! But yours is a desperate plan, only to be tried at worst. Cromwell is, perchance, not resolved on the king's *death*—his deposition! At all events, I will ascertain his real sentiments first."

"You may readily do so—I will send you the Prince of Wales's carte-blanche, ratified by the states of Holland," said Marie. "But if he refuses all compromise—what then?"

"I accede to your plan," replied Ingulph.

"But dare you trust yourself—will you meet De

la Pole, with Cromwell's answer, or your own?" said Marie, with obvious hesitation.

"Where is he to be found?" was Ingulph's reply.

"At the Water-poet's—at Taylor's—a faithful man to the king," returned Marie.

"To-morrow, before sunset, I will be there," said Ingulph, hurriedly. "But if I have any tidings of importance for you to hear, Marie, where am I to seek for you?"

"Where was I the night you sought me to save my life at the hazard of your own?" said the lady, with an eloquent smile. Almost simultaneously a tap was heard at the door, and Lilly entered.

"If it might please you," he said, with a leer, which, displeasing as it was, convinced Ingulph that he had not overheard the conversation, about which they had not always been sufficiently guarded; "if it might please you, the buriers are come for my two dead folks, and mayhap you would not care to be seen of them."

"Farewell, then!" said Marie, faintly. "Do not follow!—Lady Carlisle awaits me at hand."

Ingulph felt the necessity of obedience, and murmuring a passionate echo to that "farewell," awaited a few moments after her retreat—followed, met Lilly, gave him a handsome gratuity, and left the house.

"Ha, ha, the buriers!" said Lilly, chuckling with delight. "Nothing else would have parted them, I suppose, to-night; but it was not quite so pleasant for me, momently expecting bloodshed."

The astrologer then hastened back to his sanctum, but before he arrived, the magic mirror, as it was

doubtless considered by many of his visitors, glided open, and a small inner chamber, filled with various machines, appeared, out of which stepped the Lord De la Pole.

"Truly, my lord, I feared every moment you would have been bolt out among us!" said Lilly, with something between a smile and a sneer.

"They say that listeners hear no good of themselves,—and it is true!" said the young lord, in a tone very different from his usual one of careless vivacity. "But I have only played my common cards as yet, and come now to the trumps. Keep secret what you have known, Lilly, and henceforth depend on friends more certain than those you have above."

Contributing an additional and much larger sum than the astrologer had yet received for his day's work, De la Pole also retired.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"Let not our looks put on our purposes."
JULIUS CÆSAR.

As if relieved by magic from an enormous weight of anguish on his heart, Ingulph seemed as if his existence were suddenly renewed, and that all the dried-up fountains of hope in his soul resumed their brilliant play.

According to agreement, the carte-blanche was transmitted to him on the following morning, by the discreet hands of Taylor. Despite the king's refusal to plead, the High Court had determined to proceed in the examination of witnesses against him; and hoping to find Cromwell there, and so to speak to him with less suspicion, Ingulph hastened to Westminster.

On arriving, he learned that the lieutenant was expected; but he sat for some time listening without hearing the evidence brought to substantiate the king's presence at various battles, which were to be the proofs of his high treason. At last Cromwell came in, arm in arm with Fairfax, who had a very unwilling aspect, yet nevertheless took his seat at the head of the board. But he had not been there many minutes

before a page entered with a note; and after perusing it, he muttered that his wife was ill, and withdrew.

"Alack! poor woman! she hath the qualms!" said Ireton, with an ironical smile. "And troth, I fear, she will infect the good man himself with this shivering ague of fear!"

"Peace, Ireton, peace!—who knows what hearts may fail in the sore heat and glow of the furnace?" said Cromwell, sharply. "But let us on with the witnessing; for indeed we cannot too much strengthen wavering souls; and the blood of so many cannot be stifled. Dethewarre, thou wilt bear witness to Naseby-field, for there thou wert, and saw the king to thy cost."

"I would speak on that point with your honour in private," replied Ingulph, anxiously availing himself of the opening.

"Is it for satisfaction on particulars, or for some clinch of thought, for indeed I know full well what it is to have a heart fretting against the Lord!" said Cromwell, pathetically. "Come into the Court of Wards—there is no man there."

Ingulph followed his commander into the apartment named, and carefully closed the doors after him. Cromwell looked back with some surprise, and then walked up to the window at the farther end of the apartment.

"What is the matter?—Is aught wrong in the city?" he said, in a tone of no slight alarm.

"An exceeding great dislike of all our proceedings,—no worse that I wot of," replied Ingulph; "and a passionate desire that we should conclude

on some bargain with the king, and compose the distractions of this miserable land."

"It cannot be—the man is utterly faithless," said Cromwell, after a moment's pause. "None know that better than thou—wherefore I marvel to hear thee speak so earnestly, as if thou too wert of this judgment."

"I discern no other means to 'scape endless broils, and miseries, and bloodshed!" said Ingulph, avoiding his commander's searching eye. "Under terror of the coming punishment, the king might probably be prevailed on to abdicate."

"You do not know King Charles the—*last*—if you think so!" said Cromwell, hastily.

"There is only the choice between his deposition and his blood; are you really resolved to shed it?" said Ingulph. "It is an act unparalleled since the beginning of the world."

"Therefore it is the more certain that it is of God!" said Cromwell, enthusiastically. "For who but He can have inspired a thought which has no archetype in earthly things, and is therefore His own demonstration to man! Is the blood of the saints which Charles hath poured but water? What the army do positively intend, I know not; but we must keep with the wave, if we would not it should overwhelm us; and truly—most truly—the army seems now to be bent on his death! If so, we must of necessity obey!—*Necessity!*—It is an iron word, and yet the Lord speaks chiefly that way to men; for when circumstances become irresistible, free-will is a sound,

and we are no longer but passionless tools and instruments."

"I would fain believe it!" said Ingulph, with a deep sigh. "But there are many who deem, were the king thus slaughtered, there is no hope ever to settle the nations in peace."

"Their faith is weak,—verily 'tis our only way of peace; the blood of the king alone can unite us all —and for ever—in excluding his tyrannous race from the throne! Depose the king!—you but proclaim his son! But what panic is this hath seized you too, that you lay down your sickle, at the ninth hour, when the husbandman cometh to reward his labourers? Is not your day-dream dawning, when this noble land of England shall become the oasis of the earth's desert—freedom, equality, glory, religion, and happiness, flourishing throughout her length and breadth; no royalty, or nobility battening like greedy vultures on her liver; merit the only claimant of reward; commerce free and unshackled as the winds that fill her sails; mercy, humility, and godliness, the lictors of her magistrates; peace, plenty, and the unutterable enjoyment of the Lord to all men, in their own way; the office of government being merely as of the rudder to the vessel, to guide it cheerfully to harbours of rest and riches."

"It was my youth's dream!" said Ingulph, warming with his old poetic fancies. "But can it ever be more? The royalists grow furious; and hear we not the churning of the mad sea of fanaticism ready

to overwhelm all? Were it not sufficient if the king be solemnly deposed and deprived for breach of trust?"

"Who can foretel whither the waters will go now they are let out?" said Cromwell, in a displeased tone. "And is not the Lord sufficient to establish his kingdom, He who laid the foundation of the heavens, and said to the sea—Thus far and no farther! It is the army—not I—that do it! Am I their master?"

"Wherefore then obey them against your will, when you can go with it, and become the master of all?" said Ingulph.

"What means the boy?" returned Cromwell, looking sternly at him. Ingulph thought the time had now arrived to present his paper, which he handed over to Cromwell, with a brief intimation that it had been presented to him by one who imagined that he had some little favour with him to embolden the present action.

Cromwell hesitated for an instant to take the papers, but the extreme anxiety of Ingulph's expression overcame his reluctance. He opened the letter—a blank—signed by the prince and queen and attested by the States of Holland, declaring that whoever would save the king's life might therein write his own conditions.

Cromwell examined the seals for some moments without suffering any signs of opinion to escape him. At last he muttered to himself—"I marvel if my Lord Jermyn held her majesty's taper while she dropped the wax, 'tis so niggardly bestowed!" and

he walked up and down for some moments thoughtfully, with his hands behind him.

"No, no!" he said at length, pausing. "We cannot trust the king, and this is but waste paper and wax—easily torn, easily melted. Moreover, seeing how this mad and unreasonable tide of popular favour hath flowed back to him, unless it reach a fall soon, it will roar down this poor godly army and ourselves! What to do with him?—Shut him in the Tower?—Marry, he will escape on the air!—In some obscure fortress?—He will be assassinated, or rebellions continual will weary out the bravest of us all!"

"You are then resolved on the king's destruction?" said Ingulph, wildly.

"Listen, boy! Alack, you know how well I love you, to trust you thus far, but not for what cause!" said Cromwell, shedding tears as he spoke. "I was once in earnest to save this obstinate man; but from all that has happened, 'tis plain the Lord has rejected him, and chosen another. I have fasted and prayed in his behalf, but have received no answer; and now 'tis altogether too late, for the army is bent on it; and indeed his tyranny—eleven years without a parliament—the land drenched in gore—this last struggle which he raised while affecting only to seek peace—he must die!"

"You will find, general, that many will desert you in so bloody a consequence!" said Ingulph, hastily.

"Let me at least find thee faithful, who have chiefly led me to it," said Cromwell. "Do not de-

sert me, Ingulph! thou art my youth, my better nature; do not desert me!—but be the staff of mine age as thou hast been my sword in battle, and when I am gone my mantle descend on thy shoulders!"

"Would you so disinherit your own blood?" said Ingulph, much affected with this effusion of his renowned chief.

"Perchance—you are of it too!" said Cromwell, hurriedly, and colouring deeply, deeply as any country wench before a full bench of justices. Then continuing to pace the room with increasing agitation, he said, "I have some reason to think thou art akin to me! The woman Tribulation;—in the days of my unregeneracy and youth, I was a royster—and one of its chief corrupters was that unhappy but now zealous and converted woman—who did then flourish on the wages of sin here in London. She is your mother—and she says—I am your father."

Keeping his face averted in some confusion, the lieutenant had not noticed the changes of expression in Ingulph's, but suddenly a peal of wild laughter struck on his ear, and he turned with astonishment and alarm, for it was evidently not of mirth. But the laughter still continued.

"What ails thee, boy?" he said, seizing him by the arm, and shaking him violently.

"Nay, sir, but I did ever hear—the Marquis of Montacute!" gasped Ingulph, suppressing with difficulty the hysterical paroxysm which mounted in his breast.

"To procure your better nurriture, Tribulation deceived that man—her first misleader—with a

simulated tale, not knowing the time might come when the poor, rollicking student of the laws might become the arbiter (the Lord willing it so, to whom be the glory!) of three great but distracted kingdoms!" said the lieutenant.

"The arbiter!" repeated Ingulph, vacantly.

"It is a comforting word in the Psalms, and in season," said Cromwell, ecstatically. "'Wait on the Lord; be of good courage; and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord!' Deem you that He who raised up Moses and Aaron in captive Israel, will want for a man in this people to do his work? I may confide in thee, my son!—in thee alone. Forasmuch as David was but a poor herdsman, and yet the Lord chose him in the place of unholy Saul—and he founded a line of kings which but for their own backsliding had remained till this day—I tell thee, Ingulph, I do believe that—I am the man!"

Ingulph stood for some moments astounded at this revelation of mingled ambition and fanaticism.

"You are amazed, Esau, son of my youth!" said Cromwell, whose usually austere and common-place countenance was singularly illuminated. "But you now know what heaven has in hand for me to do—shall I miss thy form beside me in the heat of the strife? You owe me some little matter of love and kindness—and what do you owe to the perfidious tyrant!—Look here, and behold."

The lieutenant drew from many, in a little silver case which he carried in his pocket, the letter intercepted by Stonehenge, which led to the discovery of

that in Huncks's saddle. Cromwell had not thought proper to divulge the contents on that occasion; but now he desired Ingulph to read them. It was from the king to Lady De la Pole, commanding her, on pain of his severe displeasure, to reside with her lord, with whom it appeared as if she had quarrelled, and from whom she was living apart. It was intermixed with the monarch's usually elaborate scholastic divinity in proof of the reasonableness and propriety of his command, and including many sharp inuendoes against a "pitiful adventurer and traitor," whose name Dethewarre easily supplied.

It is probable that the perusal of this document produced an effect different from that intended by the wily politician; but Ingulph dextrously used it to the purpose which he was now obliged to entertain.

"It is I then who have convinced you of the king's faithlessness?" he said, mournfully. "But I cannot heartily join in his destruction till I am convinced that he is determined not to give this persecuted people rest. Let me offer him this paper to sign, and so ascertain how far he is willing to bend."

"He is more obstinate than ever," said Cromwell. "His neck is stiffened against reproof; he imagines the vile breath of the mob will terrify us to kneel to him for mercy. To propose conditions will but render him more obstinate; but do as you will—I trust in you wholly."

There was a pang at Ingulph's heart, but he replied—"Let me take my turn to guard the king, and I will see him, and learn his resolves."

"My life against a dicer's oath you find him fixed as adamant!" said Cromwell, glancing at Ingulph with a slight degree of doubt. "But you shall have the guard to-night; you have taught your lads too well their duty for me to distrust either them or you."

## CHAPTER XV.

"Now we must a shew a master-piece indeed;
To meet the man whom we would make an end of.
E'en at that time when mortal war's within,
When the blood boils and flushes to be at him,
Yet then to show the signs of heartiest love."

LEE.

As soon after this conversation as he thought it advisable, to avoid suspicion, Ingulph hastened to the Water-poet's residence. Taylor received him with great satisfaction, and seemed to understand his business, for he ushered him instantly into a back-parlour; and in reply to Ingulph's inquiry for one Master Saveall, said with a significant smile, "Ay, ay, you ask for water, but you want wine," and disappeared.

In a few moments De la Pole's voice was heard unconcernedly humming an air, and he entered the apartment in a garb so accurately puritanical, that at first even Ingulph did not recognise him. Everything about him was formal, angular, and precise; his colours sad-brown and black; his visage composed and gloomy; the hat high, and only buckled with lead.

"Here I am, Josiah Saveall, travelling dealer in ointments and pharmacy, sovereign against the cramp, agues, rheumatism, stitches in the side, and all other ills, however caught or kept, and, moreover, an expounder of all things doubtful in heaven or earth!" said De la Pole, with apparently as much frankness as if nothing had ever occurred to interrupt the friendship between him and his victim.

"'You are more than all these, my Lord De la Pole!" returned Ingulph, inwardly grinding his teeth.

"I am such no longer—I have resigned the title to the king, who has restored it to one whose right it is!" replied De la Pole, mildly.

"I will tell Master Stonehenge so," replied Ingulph, with a bitter smile. De la Pole started and coloured.

"If he be the Knight of De la Pole, the best part of his time was madness, and now 'tis worse with him than ever," he said; "but Master Taylor is so faithfully ours that—I will not fail to tell thee all anon, good gossip, if you will leave us awhile by ourselves, for all men are not so childish trustful as I am."

Taylor laughed knowingly, and withdrew.

"I have only to say—my part in the contract shall be executed this evening—that is all my business with your lordship," replied Ingulph. "The lord-general is ailing now with his usual malady of the gout; send a closed sedan to Cotton House when I have mounted guard; I will give orders to admit it, as if it contained his excellency; the safety of the king's person will then depend on you."

"I shall not fail—I have one virtue at least!" said De la Pole, bitterly. "But this is something sudden! Would you consent we might do more than save the person of your royal father! There are all the broken ends of my plot in Waller's time, which I could gather up. The moment the king is out of their clutches, my old friends the citizens will declare for a peace. Fairfax will not move against us, and would your regiment declare for us we could set the king on his throne again ere sunset; and what a glory, what a rapture were that, to blow up the vessel of treason just entering full sail into the haven!"

"The moment the king's person is safe, my regiment shall proclaim a republic," replied Ingulph.

"Surely you rave—when you are just named a peer, and with a plenteous estate conferred on you!" exclaimed De la Pole.

"Let us not debate the point, if it please your lordship!" said Ingulph, with such extreme calmness, that De la Pole haughtily bowed. "Bring your boat to the Old Palace Stairs—send the sedan—and all is agreed."

De la Pole assented; the hour was decided, and the rivals parted, with infinite coldness on the part of Ingulph, and with affected courtesy on that of De la Pole; but as the former left the hostel, the cavalier arose, and giving vent to his suppressed passions in a furious laugh, he bowed very profoundly to the closed door.

"Good night, my lord earl!" said he in a mocking tone; "but it shall go hard in the hubbub which is

coming if I do not inherit my titles back again, thanking only the point of my dagger!"

Taylor re-entered as he spoke these words, and the cavalier, after musing for some minutes, informed the Water-poet of the project for the evening.

"I must trust in you for the boat, the water being your natural element," he said, with a quaint smile; "but whether instantly to proceed to the vessel, the river being commanded at so many points by ordnance, I scarcely know. Had we some sure place of concealment, more might perhaps be done, for the citizens would fly to arms with the royalists, to defend the king's person—and Fairfax would not interfere to recapture him!"

"Let us not run our necks into Chaloner's noose, my good lord!" said Taylor, in considerable alarm.

"Fear not, fear not!" replied the cavalier; and he remained for a few minutes immersed in thought.

"This Stonehenge must needs be far gone in idiocy," he said at last, "since his wife finds means to write to me so lovingly again."

"His wife! after all she has suffered for you?" said Taylor, incredulously. "Marry, I doubt me if any man else's wife would do as much for her lawful spouse."

"Hast thou forgotten thine own see-saw?" said De la Pole smilingly.

> "'For a woman, a spaniel, and a walnut-tree,
> The more you beat them the better they be.'

"Yea, she is very earnest to see me once again, and

declares her master is now so constantly abroad, that there is scarce any hope—or fear—of meeting him."

"I would not run the risk within a thousand miles, were I you!" said Taylor, shrugging his shoulders.

"I must now procure the sedan, and such stout fellows as will not hesitate to do any bidding of mine!" said De la Pole, apparently not noticing this remark. "But ere I sally forth, I will array myself something nearer the mark, for my best friends will scarcely know me in this guise. Midnight is the hour; and I shall be with you again long ere it strikes."

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Fate's dark recesses we can never find;
But fortune, at some hours, to all is kind:
The lucky have whole days which still they choose;
The unlucky have but hours, and those they lose."

DRYDEN.

CROMWELL'S regiment of horse at the Mews, Fairfax's of foot, in Whitehall, and several great divisions on various important points, inclosed Westminster in a network of spears. The guard on the king's person usually consisted of fifty in number, picked men, who were frequently changed, to prevent the danger of corruption or of pity. Ingulph selected such soldiers whom he thought most devoted to himself, including Joyce and his men. At ten o'clock he was to relieve the guard, and the interval was spent by him in considerable agitation. The discovery of Marie's constancy had in a manner reseasoned life to his palled taste, and he could not but feel that the enterprise in which he was embarked was fraught with danger. What was to become of himself after the king's escape, in which his complicity must be evident? His intentions were, the moment the discovery became inevitable, to return to the city, to proclaim a commonwealth, and abide the issue. The ingratitude he was thus compelled

to show to Cromwell, troubled him deeply; but he thought that when his motives were explained, and his intentions developed, the lieutenant could not but pardon him.

Arriving at Cotton House with his troop, he found Axtel, a determined republican, on guard, who informed him of the points at which the lieutenant had desired sentinels to be placed; and to Ingulph's great vexation, he kindly accompanied him in setting them. Most admirably indeed was the guard posted, so as apparently to baffle all hope of escape. Sentinels stood at every outlet, and on the parapets of the house; and three different chains of patrols encircled it in widening rings.

The obliging Axtel at last conducted Ingulph to the chamber which he was to occupy as commander of the guard, and which he informed him was next to the king's. "He complains highly of the poor soldiers' tobacco," he said, in explanation of the disordered appearance of the chamber. "But, poor lambs, they never heed him, but smoke on. I'll warrant you care not to keep lonely watches more than I do; so I always have half a dozen of my lads or so about me here."

"But my soldiers are not such good company as yours, perchance," replied Ingulph.

"Nay, then, I'll come back and drink a stoup with you, as soon as I have seen the poor sheep to their quarters," said generous Axtel.

"Not so, for I am weary, and should be but sleepy company to-night," returned Ingulph; and

after some farther polite offers and declinings, Axtel at last went sheer off, but not without some mistrust visible in his manner.

Ingulph felt the necessity of making the king aware of the approach of the crisis; but he had a reluctance to present himself before him which only necessity could have subdued. After sundry pauses of hesitation, he at last ventured to tap at the door of the royal chamber.

It was opened by Herbert, very cautiously, and with an appearance of much surprise and alarm. Ingulph then perceived that the king was engaged in perusing a book by the flickering light of a wax taper set in a silver bason to screen it from the air.

The sound of his voice struck Charles instantly, and he looked forward with an expression of anxiety. Herbert communicated the young commandant's request to speak with his majesty, and returned with an immediate assent. But although his countenance expressed much emotion, the king only extended his hand with grave dignity for Ingulph to kiss, who fell on both knees, and for the moment was overcome, for he melted into tears.

It is probable that Charles felt much internally, but his habitually cold and lofty manner did not desert him; and the stern calmness with which he inquired his business of the commandant, as if addressing a stranger, restored Ingulph to firmness.

"If it might be, I would fain speak with your majesty in private," he said, springing up.

"In private? Master Herbert may be trusted

with aught that concerns me," replied Charles, as if he disliked the thought of a tête-à-tête, or the explanations it might entail.

Thus commanded, Ingulph briefly, despite his agitation, revealed the project which was on foot for the king's deliverance. To his surprise, Charles looked as troubled as if it had been to a contrary effect.

" 'Tis well-nigh impossible!" he said hurriedly. " The river is well guarded—an immediate pursuit must take place;—perchance this is but another version of the Hurst Castle project, to get me butchered under some pretence of my attempting to escape! For I know they dare not—they dare not —bring their sovereign to death, as they threaten, in the open sun, in the gaze of the people!"

" Sire, they who have dared to think it, dare to do it," said Ingulph, in a tone which seemed to strike Charles painfully.

" You too have been of the number, Master Dethewarre!" he said, with asperity. " But in the school whose apostle you have been with word and deed—even parricide—parricide!—for what is it less for subjects to take away the life of the father of the body politic—even parricide has been nobly esteemed! Fratricide at least, for did not Thrasybulus—ay, and by some it hath been thought that Brutus was beholden to Cæsar for the life which—but no more of that! I cannot think this project feasible save in a captive's dream."

" Your majesty suspects me, then?" replied In-

gulph, in a tone which obviously troubled the king, for he replied with emotion—"Not so, not so!—but your soldiers are furious republicans, who would be glad of a pretext to hack me to pieces. I would not be played on as a puppet to mine own destruction! There may be some in great places secretly conniving at this plan, intending its catastrophe to be in my slaughter, which they dare not openly effect."

"And yet, assuredly as I speak to your majesty with living breath, those who have the work in hand will do it openly, if at all!" said Ingulph, passionately.

"I know thou art much in the confidence of this new Jeroboam," said Charles, with a suspicious glance. "But I have one with me who was in the confidence of all mankind, who like Pythagoras had surely passed through all the forms of existence—honest Will of Avon:—and what says he?

> "'There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
> That treason dares but peep to what it would.'"

"But, Jeroboam—as your majesty is pleased to call General Cromwell," replied Ingulph; "with necessary compliances on your majesty's part, might yet be won over to accept conditions."

"Say you so?" replied Charles, suddenly. "Yea, if I would consent to sacrifice my honour and my conscience, my own and my people's rights, and those of the church of God, to rebels, schismatics, and villains, I might yet regain the pageantry of my power! But I will not give the lie to God and my

own soul to obtain the sovereignty of all the realms that Satan tempted our Lord withal!"

"Nay, sire, the conditions were perchance much milder," said Ingulph. "But they must be unreserved; and would you add your signature to those on this paper, this fearful risk, for such I grant it, need not to be incurred."

"Sign a blank!" said Charles, tossing the paper disdainfully aside. "And find it filled in return with the names of my friends marked for the slaughter, with a Tyburn confession of my misdoings, including doubtless the charge of having poisoned my father, and Montacute's villanies, and so deprive myself of the faithful friends that yet remain to me, and give myself up to the sacrifice, bound hand and foot! They cannot trust me, they do not trust me, they will not trust me, nor I them! But, Ingulph," he continued, in a milder tone, "I trust in thee—I will trust in thee—although I may well perceive that De la Pole hath not—wholly."

Ingulph bowed; and the king, after a slight recurrence of hesitation, informed him that De la Pole had formed the project of uniting the presbyterians and royalists in a strong effort in his favour, and of thus compelling the army to listen to reasonable terms of accommodation. He had met with great success among the citizens, the town was full of cavaliers, and if Ingulph would join with his troops, the revolt of the city could be easily effected.

Ingulph's countenance betrayed extreme dissatisfaction at this revelation.

"The only result of such an attempt, sire," he

replied, "would be, a bloody massacre, and the seizure of the supreme power into the hands of a military dictator."

"What say you? are you mad, young man?" said Charles, much startled.

"Jeroboam would not content him with the sway of ten of the tribes of Israel; he would possess the house and the temple, and seat himself on the throne of David!" replied Ingulph.

"What! the son of a brewster seat himself on the imperial throne of England! swathe his coarse limbs in the purple of sovereignty!" said Charles, haughtily. "Tush, you have infinitely better pretensions to the throne yourself! and I would advise you to assert them."

"I thank your majesty for the hint!" replied Ingulph, in a suffocated tone. "But the moment your royal person is safe, it is my intention, and that of this great army, whose thoughts need but one voice's utterance to burst in thunder, to declare the throne a wooden stool, and the kingdom of England a free republic!"

Charles gazed in mute surprise and displeasure at the young republican. "No, no," he said at last, "put all your strengths together, ye cannot lift the stone of destiny! But I will wait till De la Pole comes, ere I decide; *he* is truly zealous in my cause! meanwhile make all your arrangements without, *he* will not deceive me!"

There was a stress on the pronoun in this latter sentence which stung Ingulph to the heart; and without saying another word he retired.

The time was now approaching when the all-important arrival of De la Pole might be expected. He gave orders at all the posts, that if a personage arrived in a sedan, they were to allow him to pass into the court-yard unquestioned, whither he was to be himself summoned. He hinted at the same time, that it would be some grandee of the army, on business with the king from the council; and to the sentinels in the court-yard, who well knew that Fairfax was often disabled by the gout, he observed that the visitor, having that disease, would probably choose to be carried in his sedan to the first landing-place.

These orders seemed to excite no suspicion, the soldiers placing implicit faith in their fire-proven commander. Ingulph then returned to his guard-chamber, and seating himself by a low, chilly fire, awaited with intense anxiety the approach of the decisive hour.

Time passed, and yet no sign of De la Pole!—Ingulph's cogitations on the infinite choice of evils before him gradually exhausted themselves; and even weariness succeeded—a calm more fretful and comfortless than fear and suspense. But so rapidly does thought consume time, that he started up amazed when he distinctly counted on St. Margaret's bell—twelve o'clock—an hour beyond the appointed one, and so late as to render an arrival suspicious.

Several times he had heard a step in the king's chamber, as if advancing to the door—but it always stopped short. But while he now stood astounded at the number of strokes he had counted, and striv-

ing to believe that in his anxiety he had mistaken the number, the door of the chamber opened, and Herbert appeared silently beckoning to him.

He hastened in, and found Charles engaged in winding up one of his watches to the time.

"Something has happened to De la Pole!" he said, with a penetrating look at Ingulph. "I trust in God he is not betrayed!——But it seems the plan is abortive; and I presume I may go to bed?"

"I beseech your majesty to delay a little longer!" said Ingulph, eagerly. "Something may have occurred to detain him."

"No," said Charles, with melancholy fixedness, "on such an enterprise, there is only one thing can stop De la Pole! Ingulph, Ingulph! if you have sacrificed him to your jealous fury and revenge, you are also guilty of my murder, and your own destruction; for, with the church's sanction, I did mean to disjoin that ill-starred union, and—but 'tis no matter now!"

"Would there were some asseveration by which devils might be believed, since your majesty is pleased to consider me as one!" said Ingulph, wildly. "But if this occasion is lost, no other will ever offer itself. Sire, take my cloak and arms!—I will remain in your place. The soldiers are weary—the night is dark—you shall have the word; fly, sire, fly, I conjure you!"

"Do not rave this madness; you are half the head taller," replied the king.

"There are footsteps in the guard-chamber!" exclaimed Herbert. Hope rushed back on Ingulph's

heart; but on hastily stepping into the ante-chamber, his fears returned when he perceived the Water-poet, accompanied by one of his own soldiers.

Taylor's request to speak with the commandant on an important matter was announced, the soldier dismissed; and at the same moment that Ingulph impatiently demanded the news, the king entered with Herbert. The Water-poet did not anticipate so august an interview, and fell almost on his face, in the excess of loyal awe.

"Good friend, arise, and tell us the worst the first!" said the king, clutching him up violently by the belt. "Is my lord a prisoner? who has betrayed him?"

It was some time ere Taylor's perturbation allowed him to shape a rational tale; but by degrees it was collected that De la Pole had, in an inexplicable manner, disappeared. About an hour after Ingulph and he had parted, the young lord dressed himself with his wonted splendour of toilette, insomuch that Taylor had remonstrated with him on the danger of exciting notice. De la Pole laughed, and said he was going to make arrangements with a lady whose assistance would be of consequence to their success, and loved not to show himself slovenly before women. However, he accepted the loan of Taylor's cloak to conceal his habiliments, and promising to return with the sedan that was to be used in the enterprise, left the house.

Taylor, after executing divers commands, including the delivery of certain messages in the city, had

been in attendance at Whitehall Stairs with his boat for some hours. But growing alarmed at the long delay, he had left it there with one of his assistants, and hurried home to make inquiries. There he learned that De la Pole had not returned, that no sedan had arrived, and that there were no tidings whatever about him.

"The gallant youth has been betrayed!—and all is over now!" said Charles, with a mournful glance at Ingulph. "Doubtless he was on his way to speak with my Lady Fairfax."

"No, sire, no; nothing is lost as yet," said Ingulph, distractedly. "I will feign orders—my soldiers will not suspect me—and will escort you to Taylor's boat, as if it were to the Tower;—and I will proceed with you at once to Montacute's vessel."

"It is undoubtedly seized too, by this time," said Charles, with an apathetic expression. "I will stay here, and trusting in God, meet my fate, whatever it be."

It was in vain that with every argument which reason or passion could suggest, Ingulph besought the king to change this resolution. His suspicions were rooted beyond any effort to remove; and wrapped in the dense mist of prejudices which made him imagine his enemies dared not openly accomplish his destruction, he concluded that this plot was formed to accomplish it with fair appearances of necessity. He believed that Ingulph had delivered up De la Pole, after the interview with Marie, to be rid of a hated rival; and from his zeal still to effect

his flight, he concluded that the republicans found his presence an insuperable bar to their projects, and that even if the higher plotters did not project his murder, they hoped to deprive him of all hope of retrieving his crown.

The Water-poet and Herbert joined vainly in supplications, and at length, wearied with their persevering intreaties, the king returned towards his chamber.

"But at least—at least—sign this paper, that in the event of the worst some hope may remain!" said Ingulph, kneeling in his way in an agony of despair.

"Ay!—is this your object!" returned the monarch, with sudden violence. "But though all else is lost, my honour still remains to me, and you shall not deprive me of that! But, stay,—send my betrayed De la Pole to me with it, and I may yet—but no, I will never do so manifest a wrong to my conscience, my honour, and my cause!"

Leaving Ingulph motionless with grief and indignation, the king passed on into his chamber, followed by Herbert, who closed the door, and bolted it in the interior, apparently at the royal command.

## CHAPTER XVII.

"Oh, she is gone! the talking soul is mute:
She 's hushed: No voice, no music now is heard:
The bower of beauty is more still than death;
The roses fade; and the melodious bird
That waked their sweets, has left them now for ever!"

LEE.

IT was, as Taylor reported, nearly nightfall, when Lord De la Pole sallied forth on his ill-omened visit. Hastening to the hermitage in the now utterly desolate gardens of Whitehall, the mulatto suddenly met him—apparently by agreement.

"All is well—Master Stonehenge is at the council of officers," said the black, whose teeth chattered with terror. "But hasten, my señor—for he is a magician, and may discover us!"

Smiling scornfully, the young cavalier followed his timorous guide to the old palace, and ascended the tower, in an apartment of which, to escape the observation of her attendants, he was taught that Mistress Stonehenge awaited him. Despite of all the injuries he had inflicted on her, and the exceeding cruelty of the manner in which he had given her up to the vengeance of her husband, De la Pole never doubted for an instant that he should readily

cajole her into his present purposes. He had learned the nature of woman—inexhaustible in love and forgiveness—as children do that of a watch, by destroying it.

Yet it was not without a moment's hesitation that he reached the little flight of steps which led to the laboratory of the betrayed astrologer. But while he paused, as if in doubt, the mulatto ran up to announce his approach; and shortly after a voice, gay, tender, and vivacious, as in its day of happiness—the voice of Ramona, was heard, singing apparently like the nightingale to lure its mate.

> "Oh break not yet my heart, she said,
> Oh break not yet awhile;
> Thy latest tears are surely shed,
> Live on, live on, to smile!
> How can I live, the heart replied,
> When every throb is pain?
> Why should I live if tears nor smiles
> Bring back my love again?"

"I am here—my own dearest love—after all!" said De la Pole, with a degree of vehemence akin to his ancient passion, and springing up two or three stairs at once, he rushed into the laboratory.

It was now night, and from the narrowness of the window, it was usually dark in this chamber long ere, from its height, one would have thought it probable. But a lamp suspended from the ceiling, and the glare of the mystic fires burning on the pillars, amply lighted up the scene. Considerably to De la Pole's surprise, the table was covered with prepara-

tions for a rich banquet, with fruits, with flowers, with wine, and the most delicate confections; and reclining on a couch, dressed with all her characteristic splendour and glitter, lay Ramona. But how changed! Hearing his step, she raised herself on her arm, and seemed gazing and watching the effect of her song with the wild, lurid, deceitful expression of the female hyena, which the poets fable lures travellers to its den with moans and cries like a woman in distress or danger. Even De la Pole's heart was touched to its core by the woe-begone, scarcely living ghastliness of her complexion and look, while his usually iron nerves quivered at the terrific meaning of her attitude and eyes.

De la Pole slowly approached the couch, and she watched him coming with a strange mixture of triumph and unutterable anguish. He stood beside her, and she extended to him her thin white hand with a glance which spoke all the despair, and grief, and rage, and vengeance, accumulated in her long brooding over her unspeakable wrongs and woes.

"You are ill—alas, my sweet Ramona, the old monster's breath must needs be as the fable of the spider's," he said, with a somewhat staggering manner —and broke off, at the low, deep, miserable laugh which the victim uttered.

"I am—what you have made me!" she said, more calmly.

"Nay, my Ramona!—remember, what could I do, accused as I was—overwhelmed?" replied De la Pole. "But God is my witness! I never dreamed

the accursed old man would treat you as he has done; and but that he is mad—but you shall have vengeance, vengeance!—ample vengeance."

"Yes, I shall have vengeance — vengeance — ample vengeance!" repeated Ramona, in a dreamy tone. "I wished to bid you a last farewell—my strength fades fast—I am going home to my land again, I mean,—I know not what I mean,—but you, —I did not know that you had yet that love for me to desire to see me once again—ever again—yet you are here!"

"My own sweet Ramona! I have never loved but you; my accursed fate has indeed separated us, but—all may yet be well again!" he replied, tenderly. "This monstrous madman, who would have murdered you under such foul pretexts—if you will assist me—we will yet baffle him,—we will yet be all to one another!"

Ramona listened with an incredulous but softened look, and encouraged by the change, De la Pole hinted so much of the plot he had formed for the king's liberation, as was necessary, he thought, to convince her of the necessity of obtaining possession of the tower, as a place in which to conceal the royal person. To effect this, the capture of Stonehenge would be advisable; and he proposed that Ramona should in some manner contrive, with the assistance of the mulatto, to lock him up in his laboratory.

"Yes, he has brought me to the arms of death—and yet he loves me as well—perhaps better than thou dost, or ever did!" she said, mournfully; and

kindling up with a wilder expression, she added, "but let me hear what I must do, or ought—raise me—we will eat together—drink together a parting draught once more."

She made a feeble effort to rise on her couch, failed, and sank down exhaustedly; and De la Pole tenderly raised her with his arm round her waist, taking a seat beside her. She fainted, or at least became in a degree insensible, and De la Pole supported her head on his shoulder, gently chiding and caressing her. She revived, and in a low tremulous tone desired him to pledge her in a goblet of the rare wine, which at the same time she motioned to the mulatto to fill. He hastened to obey, but De la Pole prevented him by gaily filling the golden stoup himself; and kissing the edge, he handed it smilingly to her lips.

"Drink first, drink first!—you remember you were wont to say—love sweetened even wine!" she said, wildly pushing it back, and De la Pole was about to drink, when suddenly, with a wild shriek, she tore it away from him, and dashed it on the ground.

"No, no, I cannot, I cannot!—do not drink, it is poisoned!" she said, laughing in a distracted manner; "I cannot kill thee, De la Pole!" and she sunk upon his breast in an agony of mingled tears and laughter.

"Poisoned!" repeated De la Pole, aghast.

"And every thing on the table—the very flowers are dusted with poison!" she exclaimed. "'Tis Stonehenge's plan,—he is mad,—but—I cannot do

it,—fly, fly, let him not find you here, or all is lost!"

"If Stonehenge plotted this—let the old murderer come, and meet me for death or life!" said De la Pole, with extreme fierceness.

"Nay, for he is mad—and you are mad—surely all men are mad!" exclaimed Ramona, physical weakness yielding to mental excitement. "What, if he should be even now at hand!—Hush, do you hear a step?"

"You shall not stay with this atrocious madman, Ramona!" said De la Pole, after listening for an instant, not without alarm. "Come with me—to love, to liberty!"

"To liberty!" she repeated with a shudder. "Yes, for I shall soon become a part of the universal nothingness which Stonehenge says is death!—Hark, he is there!"

"Yes, it is he!" replied the cavalier, and starting round, and laying his hand on his sword, he perceived Stonehenge standing as if listening at the door.

There was a long pause of mutual and profound silence.

"Hush!—I think he is in one of his frequent fits of absence when he remembers nothing—shade your face!" whispered Ramona, absolutely rising without any assistance, and continuing to gaze intently in her husband's calm countenance.

"Let me not keep you standing, sir," said Stonehenge, with an urbane and smiling air. "Wife, will you not do me the honour to introduce me to the gentleman?"

"It is the Lord De la Pole—but he hath not yet tasted the viands!" said Ramona, in a firm tone, and with a slight but intelligible shake of the head to Stonehenge.

"'Tis strange lack of civility then!" said Stonehenge, suddenly assuming the air of a ceremonious host.

"Surely the mulatto—I will call for assistance!" murmured De la Pole.

"It will but anger him—we are as far from earth as heaven!" replied Ramona, in the same tone. "Perchance I may humour him—deceive him, if it must be—into patience; be calm and silent."

"Be seated, my lord, be seated!" said Stonehenge, with a ghastly smile. "No one shall break my bread, nor drain my cup, standing. I am not the king, and no royal honours shall be paid to my wife, who is only a countess, I tell you."

At a signal from Ramona, the cavalier complied, and seated himself, keeping, however, a watchful eye on the astrologer.

"Enjoy yourselves, enjoy yourselves, there is plenty!" said Stonehenge, apparently pleased with this submission. "Do not think I grudge you anything—the feast here spread is broad and ample; all the nations of the earth have eaten it, or shall, and yet enough remain. I pray you eat—meantime I will to my devotions."

And he knelt down for an instant before one of the flaming pillars.

"He is adoring the demon now that hath maddened him—whose servants thou and I are, De la

Pole!" said Ramona, wanderingly. "But he will leave us now—the paroxysm ever drives him to solitude."

Accordingly Stonehenge almost immediately sprang up, and with a peculiarly strange and very terrible smile, desired Ramona to make her guest welcome, and moved to the door.

"They say I am jealous—you will pardon, I am an old man, an old man, very old in sorrows," he said, shoving the mulatto out before him. "Yet you see—though the cavaliero is young—I dare leave you together for all eternity!"

And with one long, earnest, and indescribably mournful gaze at Ramona he crossed the threshold, and closed the door.

"Wait but an instant till he is out of hearing, and then—fly, fly!" exclaimed Ramona.

They stood together for an instant in perfect silence.

"I will not fly, Ramona, unless you accompany me!" said De la Pole, with a return of all his ancient fondness. "Come with me, my sweetest love; I dare not leave you in the power of this barbarous madman!"

"You will betray me again!" sighed the unhappy girl, sinking on his neck; and with a smile of mingled triumph and scorn the cavalier half carried and half led her to the door. He listened for an instant, and hearing no sound without, raised the latch of the door—but it would not open.

"What is the matter! What means this?" he

exclaimed, with a slight start. A loud peal of laughter resounded on the exterior.

"It means, treacherous villain! that thou and thy paramour shall never again be put to the bitterness of parting!" cried the voice of Stonehenge from the exterior. "Betrayer of my innocent wife! son of the betrayer of my broken-hearted sister!—this door is barred and could resist ordnance!—the windows are beyond the ken of hearing, almost of sight!—the viands are poisoned!—I am going to lock up every entrance to the tower—farewell for ever!"

"Oh, De la Pole, De la Pole! burst the door—I see all now—he intends to famish thee!" shrieked Ramona.

"Traitress! you have betrayed me into this horrible den!" exclaimed the cavalier, turning with frantic violence and fury on Ramona; but as his fierce glare fell on her, he saw that her whole countenance whitened,—she gave him one last look of sorrow and reproach, and he held in his arms only the corpse of the betrayed and most miserable Mexican!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

"All is not lost; th' unconquerable will
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield."

MILTON.

ON learning the disappearance of De la Pole, Ingulph certainly apprehended that his plottings had fallen under notice of the grandees; and it was plain that he was either arrested, or had found it necessary to conceal himself. Whether even Ingulph's own share in the conspiracy was known seemed doubtful; but as the remainder of the night passed without the least disturbance, and his guard was relieved in the morning by Cromwell's regiment as usual, and no news seemed astir, he took heart of grace.

Desiring Taylor to inform him as soon as he received any tidings of De la Pole, he returned to his quarters in the city. Nought unusual seemed to have occurred; people's thoughts and inquiries were all absorbed in the proceedings of the High Court, and not even a whisper was heard of so extraordinary an event as the seizure of the famous royalist, De la Pole, would have been universally considered.

Unwilling to encounter the keen eye of his commander, and expecting hourly to hear news from De

la Pole, Ingulph sent his faithful Joyce to Cromwell, to excuse his own absence by information of the perturbed state of the city, and with the emphatic addition that he had failed in his negotiation of the previous night. Cromwell returned an epistle exhorting him to increased vigilance, and communicating the intelligence that the Lord De la Pole was suspected to be in the city.

Ingulph had now no doubt that the cavalier had conceived suspicions against him, and was at work on some plan of his own in secrecy. His indignation at the treatment he had received increased proportionably, for he imagined the king had only feigned to suspect him, and had preconcerted the failure of the plan for some other of De la Pole's, which he liked better. Hourly did Ingulph expect to hear the news of the king's escape, with the resolution of proclaiming a republic on the instant that he received it.

The High Court, meantime, as if willing to break its own momentum, proceeded very slowly examining the witnesses; two days elapsed in the process, and many more seemed likely to be occupied, when suddenly the astounding tidings filled the city with uproar, that the king was finally to be brought up for sentence, and that the sentence was to be death.

Ingulph resolved to ascertain the truth of this intelligence immediately, and hurried to Westminster. The city, indeed, seemed no longer to need his care, for the whole mass of the population that were not bedridden were pouring on the same road with himself.

On arriving at the Hall, he found the court sitting, and all the private entrances of the building so besieged that he was compelled to take his chance with the crowd, and bustle a way in. His strength and resolution prevailed over many of his compeers actuated by feebler motives, and he wedged his way in almost close to the bar. The king was already in his seat, but only the back of his chair and his high-crowned hat were visible to Ingulph. Axtel, who guarded the platform, instantly noticed the glitter of Ingulph's helmet, and smiling grimly opened the rail to admit him, and he mounted the platform, but kept in the background, among the guard, with his back leaning against the rail.

Bradshaw was standing, as if to speak, and Ingulph noticed that he had assumed the crimson mantle of judgment, but the great noise in the hall, and tumult of cries and expostulations, prevented him for some time.

"Sir, since you refuse our jurisdiction, it is not to address you, but the people"— began Bradshaw, when the king interrupted him.

"I desire to be heard a little," he said, in a voice still firm, but sunken in the tones from its former alacrity; "and I hope I shall give no occasion of interruption."

"You may answer in your turn; hear the court first!" said Bradshaw, imperiously.

"If it please you, sir, I desire to be heard!" returned the fallen monarch; "and I shall not give any occasion of interruption, and 'tis only in a word. A sudden judgment—"

"Sir you shall be heard in due time, but you are to hear the court first," returned Bradshaw, peremptorily.

"Sir, I desire it; 'twill be in order to what I believe the court will say—you are in scarlet to day,—and therefore, sir,—a hasty judgment is not so soon recalled!" said Charles, with extreme earnestness.

"Sir, you shall be heard before the judgment be given; meantime you may forbear," replied the president, with somewhat less haughtiness, perhaps moved by the general murmur.

"Well, sir, shall I be heard before the judgment be given?" said Charles, with a kind of satisfaction in his tones, but with a sigh as Bradshaw proceeded without deigning to take any notice of his question.

"Gentlemen," began the president, looking round the court, "'tis well known to all, or most of you, that the prisoner at the bar has been several times brought before this court, to make answer to a charge of high treason, and other high crimes, exhibited against him in the name of the people of England—"

"It is a lie!—not half the people, not a quarter!" interrupted the same female voice which had formerly disturbed the proceedings. "Where are they or their consents?—Oliver Cromwell is a rogue and a traitor!"

"What drab is this disturbs the court?" exclaimed Axtel. "Musketeers, level at the galleries, and give fire if they utter a word more!"

"Keep your muskets for men, soldiers!" exclaimed Ingulph, in so loud a voice that all eyes

were turned upon him, and the soldiers involuntarily dropped the muzzles of their weapons.

"To which charge being required to answer," continued Bradshaw, sedately, "he has been so far from obeying the commands of the court, by submitting to their justice, that he began to take on him to offer reasoning and debate on the authority of the court, and of the highest court, which appointed them to try and judge him. But being overruled in that, and required to make answer, he was still pleased to continue contumacious, and refuse to submit to answer. Hereon the court, that they might not be wanting to themselves, nor the trust reposed in them, and that no man's wilfulness might prevent justice, have thought fit to take the matter into consideration; they have considered the charge; they have considered the contumacy, and that confession which in law arises from that contumacy; they have likewise considered the notoriety of the facts charged on the prisoner; and upon the whole are resolved and agreed in a sentence to be pronounced against him. But in respect he desires to be heard before sentence, the court has resolved to hear him. Yet, sir, I must tell you beforehand, what you have been minded of at other courts, that if what you have to say be to offer any debate concerning the jurisdiction, you are not to be heard; you have offered it formerly, and have struck at the root, that is, the power and supreme authority of the Commons of England, which, this court will admit no debate of, and which indeed, 'tis irrational in them to do, being a court

which acts on authority derived from them. But, sir, if you have anything to say in defence of yourself concerning the matter charged, the court has commanded me to let you know they will hear you?"

"Since I see you will hear nothing of debate concerning that which I confess I thought most material for the peace of the kingdom, and the liberty of the subject, I will waive it," replied the king. "But I must tell you that this many a day all things have been taken from me, but what I call dearer to me than my life, namely, my conscience and my honour. And if I had a respect to my life more than the peace of the kingdom, and the liberty of the subject, certainly I should have made a particular defence for myself; for by that at least I might have delayed an ugly sentence which I believe will pass on me. Therefore, certainly, sir, as a man that hath some understanding, some knowledge of the world, if true zeal to my country had not overborne the care I have for my own preservation, I should have gone another way to work than I have done. Now, sir, I conceive that a hasty sentence once passed, may sooner be repented of than recalled; and, truly, the same desire I have for the peace of the kingdom, and liberty of the subject, more than my own particular ends, makes me now at last desire — that, having something to say which concerns both, before sentence be given, I may be heard in the Painted Chamber, before the Lords and Commons."

"Sir, you have now spoken?" said the president.

"Yes, sir."

"And what you have said is a further declining the jurisdiction of the court, which was the thing you were limited in before."

"Pray excuse me, sir, for my interruption, because you mistake me," said Charles, meekly, "'Tis not declining it. You judge me before you hear me speak. I say, 'twill not, I do not decline it. Though I cannot acknowledge the jurisdiction of the court, yet, sir, in this give me leave to speak; I would do it, though I did not acknowledge it. In this I protest, 'tis not declining of it, since I say, if I speak anything but what is for the peace of the kingdom, and liberty of the subject, the shame is mine. Now, I desire that you will take this into consideration: if you will, I will withdraw."

"Hear the king, my lord!" exclaimed Ingulph, in a loud voice; and "Hear the king! hear the king!" was repeated in an affrighted whisper all over the hall, as if men feared to speak, and yet could not altogether forbear.

A member of the court seemed to take courage from this, and arose pale and trembling in his place, but was instantly plucked down by those who sat near him.

By this time, Ingulph had elbowed a way up the passage from the platform to the benches of the judges; and exclaimed in a voice which commanded general attention — "My lord president, I am a member of the court, and I am not satisfied to pronounce the sentence, unless the court may adjourn on this point."

"Are you yourself, man?" said Cromwell, who

sat below, looking up with a perturbed and angry countenance, but marking the delirious anguish in Ingulph's, he continued, rising—" Nay, if any of the court are unsatisfied, we must adjourn."

" Sir," said the president, readily taking his cue, " according to what you seem to desire, and because you shall know the farther pleasure of the court on that which you have moved, the court will withdraw for a time."

" Shall I withdraw?" replied the king, eagerly. " If it were but for half an hour to consider—unless that be too much for you."

Some consultation took place among the commissioners, and the king was ordered to be removed, while the court retired to consider their resolution.

Ingulph took care to be of the foremost in the procession. The commissioners intended to adjourn as usual to the Painted Chamber, but when they entered the Court of Wards, Cromwell suddenly closed the door with a slam which resounded through the vast building, and cried " Halt!" in exactly the same tone and manner as if addressing his dragoons on parade.

" Well, sir!" he exclaimed, turning with a terrific countenance to Downes, Ingulph's fellow-dissentient. " Be now so good as to tell us, for what most excellent reason you have caused this trouble and disturbance in the court?"

" Master Cromwell — my lord!" stammered Downes, confusedly. " My lord president, I should say!—I would be exceeding glad—if the court had been pleased to condescend to that gracious

expression! But it is not too late—I desire not his death but his life—that the nations may be settled in peace. The king is now pleased to offer—that if he may but speak with his parliament—he would offer to them such things as should be satisfactory to us all."

"He seeks but delay!" said Cromwell. "Perchance to enrage the rabble more against us, by resigning the crown to the Prince of Wales. Which of you then would rather be beheaded by Charles the Second, than by Charles the First?"

"Let him but put the crown from that grey head, and we will dash it to pieces!" said Ingulph, vehemently.

"We were to refer to the parliament on any emergency," said Downes, timidly. "Surely this is an emergency! Are not these emergencies? If not, I know not what emergencies are!"

"There are others that you wot not of, Master Downes!" said Cromwell, bitterly. "He seeks but delay, in order to accomplish our utter destruction, and that of all liberty in this land! We have received sure intelligence of a vast plot in formation, both in town and country—many corruptions in the army—with the intent to restore the king without conditions, and to send all our heads to the block."

There was a silence of mingled fear and amazement for some moments.

"What has been discovered?—have any been arrested?" said Ingulph, much staggered.

"We have issued secret orders for the arrest of the key of the arch!" said Cromwell, with a mys-

terious nod at Ingulph. "'Tis an ancient friend of yours!—Fairfax's wife is peevish too—but we have a good claw on the city—yet before any sentence can be executed we must crush this conspiracy! Meanwhile, 'tis fitting that we show no fear—that we affirm our authority—terror must rule if men will not be governed otherwise. The sentence must be pronounced. Fear may then keep them tranquil—and whatever stops short of the man's destruction will be a mercy which will reconcile many."

These words broke with a sort of divine and tranquil light on Ingulph's imagination, and he so passionately eulogised the conduct which Cromwell seemed inclined to pursue, that the general looked at him in surprise.

"We have a good beagle at work on the arch-conspirator's steps—but meantime this is an inviolable secret!" said Cromwell, sternly. "And now, my lord president, now we see what great reason the gentleman had to put such a great trouble and disturbance on us—let us return! He knows not, surely, that we have to do with one of the hardest-hearted men that live on earth; however, 'tis not fit the court should be hindered from doing their duty by one peevish man; therefore, without more ado, let us return, and do our duty!"

And clutching the hilt of his sword—an action which he instantly pretended to have used to raise the weapon from clanking on the pavement—Cromwell set an example which was followed by the whole court, and left the chamber.

Feeling the necessity of the measure, but resolved

not to be seen among the unrelenting judges, Ingulph lingered behind. He had now no doubt that De la Pole was at liberty, engaged in some mighty and perilous plot, which being discovered, would probably result in the king's utter ruin, and in his own. To warn the king of the discovery seemed now of immediate consequence; and with some slight hope of effecting it, he hastened by a private passage back to the hall.

When Ingulph reached the platform, he found that the president was about to pronounce that sentence, the first since the creation of man - but not the last—wherein subjects condemned their sovereign for treason against a majesty which was hitherto but a phantom recollection looming through the visions of ages.

"Of one hundred and nine kings of Scotland, your ancestors," the undaunted Bradshaw was saying, "most were deposed, imprisoned, or proceeded against for misgovernment. Your grandmother, Marie, a papist, for many hideous crimes, was removed, and your father, an infant, crowned!"

"I desire only one word before you give sentence!" interrupted the king, passionately. "That you would hear me concerning these grave imputations you lay to my charge!"

"Sir, you must give me now leave to go on," replied Bradshaw; "for I am not far from your sentence, and your time is now past."

"But I shall desire you to hear me a few words!" reiterated the unfortunate king; "for truly, whatever

sentence you pass, in respect of those heavy imputations which I see by your speech you have put on me! Sir, it is very true that —— "

"Sir, I must put you in mind," interrupted Bradshaw. "Truly, sir, I would not willingly, at this time especially, interrupt you in anything you have to say that's proper for us to admit of: but, sir, you have not owned us as a court, and you look upon us as a sort of people met together, and we know what language we receive from your party."

"I know nothing of that," said Charles, hastily.

"You disavow us as a court," said Bradshaw, with stately austerity. "And, therefore, for you to address yourself to us, and not acknowledge us as a court to judge of what you say, is not to be permitted. And the truth is, all along from the first; you were pleased to disavow and disown us, the court needed not to have heard you one word; for unless the court be acknowledged, 'tis not proper for you to speak.

"Sir, we have given you too much liberty already, and admitted too much delay, and may admit no more; were it proper for us to do it, we should hear you freely, and should not have declined to hear at large what you could have said or proved on your behalf, whether for excusing totally or in part those great and heinous charges laid upon you. But, sir, I shall trouble you no longer! Your sins are of so large a dimension, that if you do but seriously think of them, they will drive you to a sad consideration, and may improve you to a sad and serious repent-

ance. And the court heartily wishes you may be so penitent for what you have done amiss, that God may have mercy at least on your better part! Truly, sir, for the other, 'tis our part and duty to do what the law prescribes. We are not here *jus dare* but *jus dicere.* We cannot be unmindful of what scripture says, *That to acquit the guilty is of equal abomination as to condemn the innocent.* We may *not acquit the guilty!* What sentence the law affirms to a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy to the country, that you are now to hear read to you, which is the sentence of the court. *Make an O Yes, and command silence while the sentence is read!*"

It was done; the sentence, setting forth at length the charges on which the king was condemned, and finally adjudging him to death, was read.

"Thy broken covenant avenge, O Lord!" shrieked a woman in the crowd, and it appeared as if she fell in convulsions, and was with difficulty borne out.

"The sentence now read and published," said the president, unheeding this accident, "is the act, sentence, judgment, and resolution of the whole court."

The commissioners all stood up in assent, and Charles's eye wandered for some moments with piercing search among them.

"Will you hear me a word, sir?" he said at length, very mournfully.

"Sir, you are not to be heard after sentence!" replied Bradshaw.

"No, sir?"

"No, sir, by your favour.—Guard, withdraw your prisoner."

"I may speak after sentence!" said Charles, in a troubled and confused manner. "By your favour, sir, I may speak after sentence, ever! By your favour, hold!—The sentence, sir,—I say, sir, I do—I am not suffered to speak; expect what justice other people will have!"

The guard hurried the unhappy monarch away; and during the general bustle and confusion, Ingulph had pushed his way to the stairs up which the king must pass on his return.

"Justice, justice!" shouted the soldiers, as the king appeared.

"Execution, execution! you mean now, rogues!" said Axtel. "Execution, execution, do ye hear!" And observing that no man took up the cry, he hit one a smart blow over the face with his cane, and the shout became universal as the king came.

"Silence, bloodhounds!" thundered Ingulph, pushing back the rude soldiery as they pressed insultingly on the king, whiffing their tobacco-smoke in his face. But one, transported by his barbarous zeal, spit in the king's face.

With a smile of mingled anguish and disdain, Charles wiped his visage and beard; but at the same instant the soldier was felled to the ground by Ingulph's vigorous arm.

"Poor rogues, for a testoon they would do as much to their commanders!" said Charles, glancing at the

young leader; who instantly took the opportunity, and murmured a few brief but significant words of warning on De la Pole's plot, and its discovery.

"'Tis as I thought!—you have betrayed him and me!" exclaimed the king; and with a look full of indignation and sorrow he moved on with his guard.

## CHAPTER XIX.

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream."

JULIUS CÆSAR.

INGULPH stood fixed to the spot until the last partizan vanished, gleaming faintly in the dusky gallery. He started from his reverie on hearing a voice close behind him.

"Is he gone?" said Cromwell, for it was he. "Methought I saw a gleam in the distance like golden spokes of a crown!—yet, 'tis folly, he wears none!—truly, a soldier's pike!—he is gone."

"Were we to execute this barbarous sentence, never will the crowned phantom leave our sight!" said Ingulph.

"We are not children to be affrighted with bugbears," replied the lieutenant, gloomily. "We all stand on an icy edge—but who may slide off first?—Perchance the king may yet live to laugh with his insolent Frenchwoman at some gorgeous banquet in these halls, while our headless carcasses swing in the poisoned air!"

"You dread this plot, methinks, too much!" said Ingulph.

"Thou shalt be a better judge of that anon," replied Cromwell, producing some papers which he handed to Ingulph.

All these documents were in the handwriting of Lord De la Pole—memoranda, apparently, for his own guidance. A list of citizens favourable to the cause—of the chief cavaliers—the towns in the country parts which were ready, it seemed, to revolt on a concerted signal—intimations of expected foreign succours—minutes of a correspondence with the Scots—a general plan of the outbreak intended in London—and a list of those to be put instantly, on its success, to death—composed the contents. Among the latter, with the rest of the council of officers, Ingulph found his own name marked with three stars.

"And we can by no means learn any news of the whereabouts of this most dangerous and skilful plotter!" said Cromwell. "Some storm is ready to burst."

"But how did you obtain these papers?" said Ingulph.

"By means of a trusty spy, whose name must be concealed," replied Cromwell.

"I will guess—Taylor, or Lilly?" said Ingulph, with affected carelessness. Cromwell's look re-assured him more than the immediate denial which he gave to these suspicions.

"Neither—neither!" said the lieutenant. "But let us speak low—we know not who may have his ears poking to these walls! Thou art the only man whom I trust thus unreservedly! Alas! Ireton and

Harrison need but some little pretext to set all things over the cataract! I must trust to thee a greater matter than thine years might claim,—yea, trust to thee the silent suppression of this plot in the dark. Thou art acquainted with the citizens—warn them quietly that they do not stir; that their practices are known. For any open violence, thou hast the city keys at thy girdle, posted where thou art."

Ingulph eagerly assented to the proposition, more especially as he observed Bulstocke's name among those of the citizens prepared for the frantic outbreak.

"These papers may be but thrown in our way to alarm us," said Ingulph. "But if Bulstocke really be one, I have a way to give them all good counsel."

"Let me see thee, then, to-morrow, at eventide, my honest lad," said Cromwell, with an affectionateness which troubled Ingulph more than any reproaches could have done. "To-morrow!—true, it is the sabbath; but works of mercy are not prohibited on that day! I will expect thee at eventide."

"I will do my utmost," said Ingulph, warmly. "But if this conspiracy be indeed so widely spread, it is only by extending mercy to the king that we can hope to baffle a mad outburst which may engulf us all in ruin!"

"Or—by making so tremendous an example of him, that the terror thereof may endure not only for this age, but for all time!" said Cromwell, laying his hand familiarly on the young man's shoulder.

"An example! remember that such would provoke to madness the Scots and royalists—excite the horror of the English presbyterians—the universal indignation of the European monarchies!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Our swords shall answer all;—in sooth, Mazarin is not angry to see us sheathe them in one another's vitals—but he may live yet to see us in France again!" said Cromwell, kindling with military enthusiasm which roused an answering glow in the breast of his young follower.

"Yes, let us baptize the banners of the republic in the gore of resisting enemies—not in the blood of the conquered!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"A man may indeed step aside from the work; but the tide will rush on without him!" said Cromwell, with a peculiar glance at Ingulph. "But dost thou too faint at noonday, and lay thy sickle on the hedge? Nay, sir, we leaders, high as we seem, are but the frothy crest of the strong billow that rolls below! 'Tis impossible to deal with the king—the army are resolved on it! But what is to be done, the Lord only knows! Let us seek him in humility. But now go thy ways, as I must mine, and see me again as soon as may be—for on the least stir I doubt me they will be for a sudden justice. I would not be found gossiping with thee here."

They moved off in contrary directions, but after a few paces Cromwell suddenly paused and beckoned to Ingulph.

"Take care that none of these tidings reach the king," he said gloomily; "else it may beget false

hopes, to his soul's eternal detriment, for I do withal believe—despite of all men's unwillingness—it will come to pass, for a greater than any of us declares himself very clearly in the matter."

These words struck Ingulph as ominous and contradictory, but he ventured no comment, and they parted.

Musing deeply on the means to advance his projects of preserving the king, Ingulph returned to his quarters at Guildhall, intending to proceed thence on his visit to Bulstocke. But curiously enough the alderman was there awaiting him; Ingulph found him in the guard-room, seated at the fire, with his hands buried deeply in his pockets, gazing vacantly at the huge mass of red embers in the grate.

Bulstocke's manner was much altered; it was full of distress and fear and perplexity, and he addressed Ingulph with all the distance and respect due to his office. But when Ingulph wrung his hand with the old kindliness, and inquired after his ancient friends in the old tones, the good old citizen burst into tears. It was some moments ere Ingulph extracted that Mistress Tribulation was dangerously ill, having been seized with paralysis on hearing the king's sentence pronounced—and earnestly desired to see him.

"Some say she is your near relative—heaven only knows—but you cannot refuse to see her!" said Bulstocke. "Poor woman! she doth nought but rave of you and of a broken covenant."

"I will come to-morrow at noonday," replied Ingulph, thinking this was not a bad opportunity to introduce his own business with Bulstocke. But when

he communicated the suspicions of the council, and as a friendly warning from himself, advised him to inform his fellow-citizens of the discovery, that they might keep quiet,—the consternation of Bulstocke convinced him that the story was true. Without pressing him for any definite admissions, it was well understood, before they parted, that on the following day Ingulph was to receive assurances that the citizens had abandoned their projects.

The following morning Ingulph spent visiting his detachment, and mingling with the populace in the hope to learn their sentiments. The king's fate was the universal topic of speculation, on which no man seemed to dare to form any distinct idea. Early as it was when he sallied forth, Ingulph found a vast number of persons trooping silently along the streets to Westminster. Various intents animated this movement. Some were going to St. James's, whither the king had been removed, in the hope to see him at public devotions; others to attend the solemn fast and prayers appointed by the officers to be held at Whitehall, at which the High Court was to be present; some to gather news; but the great mass were swayed by the vague inquietude which the blackening of a storm spreads over all nature, extending even to inanimate things, crisping the waves or rustling the leaves and grass as it were fearfully.

Wherever Ingulph went, his military garb spread terror and silence; men spoke with "bated breath and whispering humbleness," save now and then when women, venturing on their sex, uttered exclamations of dislike and fear as he passed.

But at last noon came, and on its stroke Ingulph was at Bulstocke's door.

Bulstocke was waiting for him, and opened the door himself; but without replying to his first question as to what success he had found in his political movements, Bulstocke desired him with great agitation to ascend immediately and speak with Mistress Tribulation, who was so ill that she might not perhaps have long the power. The citizen hastened up the stairs to announce the visitor, and after a short pause Ingulph followed. Mistress Bulstocke appeared to meet him, weeping and sobbing profusely.

They entered the sick woman's chamber, and Tribulation was seen extended powerlessly on a couch. Excessive mental agitation acting on a constitution weakened by the excesses of her youth had produced a paralysis of nearly half her frame.

It is not necessary to detail the painful conversation which ensued. Stern, calm, strong-minded as ever, Tribulation seemed as pitiless to herself as she had been to others, and to abate no jot of her resolution in the very presence of death. Much indeed of what she said was interrupted by pain and difficulty of utterance, but not at all by any other human weakness. She confessed her abetment of Stonehenge, and her deception of Cromwell, without the least expression of remorse; and seemed now to divulge both only as a means to induce Ingulph to aid in the keeping of the covenant unbroken, by preserving the person of the king.

Somewhat surprised at the little effect which her

extraordinary tidings produced, Ingulph was obliged in explanation to inform her that he knew all before, and by what means.

"And you still join with Cromwell in his black plot against the life of the king?" exclaimed Tribulation, gazing amazedly. "Cruel as the blood of thy race hath ever been, is it cruel even unto this?"

"Cromwell does not seek the king's life; he is, perchance, the only one who can or will save him!" returned Ingulph.

"You know him not!" replied Tribulation, with a spasmodic smile. "The king stands on the summit which Cromwell would reach; and were he a god, Cromwell hath ambition and daring to push him from it! But if you dare aid me, I will discover his real intents."

"What dare I not, in such a cause?" said Ingulph, passionately. "But the king has more to fear from the zeal of his friends than the machinations of his enemies."

"You have effectually baffled that, Ingulph!—you have betrayed De la Pole, in whom we all confided, and who alone secured the co-operation of the royalists with us!" said Tribulation, despairingly.

With an asseveration, the energy of which surprised even himself, Ingulph declared his total ignorance of what had become of the young cavalier.

"Then I am the more convinced that Cromwell is playing double, and trusts you but half!" said Tribulation. "Or else the cavaliers have lost confidence in us, and are plotting some enterprise among themselves. I would have you request

Cromwell to visit me for the last time—a dying request—tell him too that I have extraordinary disclosures to make! I will tell him all—I will exhort him to spare you the guilt of parricide; and from his replies, will learn what we are to fear!"

Observing that she was exhausted, Ingulph assented to the desire, and would have retired, but she eagerly beckoned him to remain. After a short pause, as if mastering some inward repugnance, she inquired if he had lately seen Stonehenge.

"Not since the first day of the trial," replied Ingulph.

"Keep out of his way, then; he is surely plotting some dismal fact which will blear the sun to hear it told!" she said, with a dismal glance. "In my delirium—for my mind is not as it should be—how can it when I am three parts stone?—I have seen him riding about the room on a black bull, with two fastened to the horns!—One was Ramona!—Hark you, Ingulph! mayhap she deserves no more pity than myself; but she is not like me in this—that I value not pity—that I need it not—that I thank no man for it. If it be possible—at some time—I would have you rescue her from that madman's clutches."

"Nay, he loves her better now than ever; I hear that he incessantly weeps and wails over her!" said Ingulph, touched with this reluctant and yet evident sign of remorse in one so relentless on almost every other point.

"Go, then, and the blessing of death rest on you—otherwise of no worth, being from so matchless a

sinner!" said Tribulation, in a somewhat troubled tone. "But I know that I have been at one time in grace, and the saints cannot relapse."

"Pray for her, oh, pray for her, Master Dethewarre!" sobbed Bulstocke's wife. "For your prayers will reach heaven, if any Christian soul's can!"

"I charge ye, do not such a thing; 'tis an accursed popish doctrine, akin to the misbelief of purgatory!" exclaimed the departing zealot, with a renewal of her ancient controversial fervour.

Ingulph attempted no rejoinder, and left the chamber, followed by Bulstocke. From him he learned that the disappearance of De la Pole had spread so general a consternation among all parties concerned in his plans, that no apprehensions need be entertained of their making the slightest movement.

Ingulph now hastened to Westminster with his intelligence; and learning that Cromwell and his officers were still engaged in their devotions in Whitehall, he hastened thither.

Passing St. James's, he became for a short period one of a vast, silent, and seemingly unmeaning mob, standing near the palace-gates, under a driving storm of sleet and snow. A faded and battered coach, with the king's arms on it, stood in the archway, and Ingulph learned that it was Bishop Juxon's, who was in spiritual attendance on the king. The despair implied in this summons struck a deadly chill into his heart, and he hastened on to Whitehall more rapidly.

Entering the royal chapel, Ingulph elbowed his

way to the speaker's chair, near which sat Bradshaw and the members of the High Court, all looking pale and exhausted, but manfully listening on. Cromwell immediately noticed him, but only with a slight nod, and a gesture for him to take a seat on the raised benches occupied by the commissioners.

Five gifted brethren had already succeeded each other, and Peters was ascending the pulpit. The words of his text struck with ominous significance on Ingulph's ear.

"Psalm cxlix. 6, 7, 8, 9, verses. 'Let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishment upon the people, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written, this honour have all his saints, praise ye the Lord!'

"Beloved!" exclaimed Peters, whose fanatic eloquence was much admired by the zealots of his persuasion. "It is the last Psalm but one, and the next Psalm hath six verses, and twelve hallelujahs; praise ye the Lord, praise God in his sanctuary, and so on. For what, for what, shall be praised the Lord now? What hath he done for us, that we exalt his name?

"Look at my text; there is the reason of it; for our kings are bound in chains, and our nobles in fetters of iron; therefore praise ye the Lord, &c. Blessed be God, we are redeemed from the captivity, brought out of Babylon; we have crossed the Red Sea of this nation's blood dryshod, and have now but to look back, and see Pharoah and his host sink-

ing, struggling, roaring, shrieking in the masterful waves of God's judgments! Glory again, I say, glory again to God, and all his angels; for this is a marvellous work! I have prayed and preached these twenty years, and now I may say with old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!'

"Blessed be God, the House, the Lower House, is purged, and the House of Lords themselves are utterly down in the dust, a scorn, and a pointing of the finger, sunk in the Dead Sea of their own iniquities;—where is Sodom, where is Gomorrah? Yea, verily, and although Lot himself was a good man, there was his wife looked back on the carnal city! The Lord forbid it should come to pass again, for that judgment cannot be forgotten! And, oh, the glories of that sinful court! Are they not even as those apples, fair to sight, that crumbled away at the touch? But the Lord knows how we are all exercised under a heavy conflict of the spirit in this matter! The day is dark and cloudy to some, who see not God's glory breaking over all; but some are as those on a hill-top, in sunshine and in brightness, while the valleys below are full of darkness and tribulation! But why art thou cast down my soul?—why do the knees of the strong man slacken? Was there ever a clearer manifestation than this people have received, even when the Lord spoke in thunder and lightnings on Sinai? What says the text?

"But let us shake hands with that for a moment, and ask what are the news in this Gomorrah of our

own? The great inquiry is everywhere, with gaping mouths and pallid faces, what shall become of the king? Should and shall are very different words, but here they are the same; for truly, what the army will do, that they can do; and there is no power but of God, say the cavaliers; and, good truth, who is mighty but the Lord? Who can contend against him? If he has rejected the king, is it for this godly army to hug him to its bosom? Emanuel, Emanuel, is written on the bridles of our soldiers' horses; but of the king's, I have known eighty thousand of them, and not one of them a gracious person!

"But to our text!—Ye shall bind your king in chains; but, soft, I must not talk so here, I am in the king's chapel; nothing but velvet is to be talked here!—court holy-water sprinkled on their pomps and vanities—watering their rank weeds as if they were roses! There is a remarkable passage in Amos. Amos went to preach, and Amaziah would not let him, but Amos would preach! I offered to preach to the king to-day, but the poor wretch would not hear me; but yet I will preach! There is a great company among us like the Jews; they cry out, let Christ be crucified, and let Barabbas be released! It is a very sad thing that this should be a question among us, as among the old Jews, whether our Saviour, Jesus Christ, must be crucified, or that Barabbas should be released, the oppressor of the people, a tyrant, a murtherer! O, Jesus, where are we, that that should be a question among us?

"And because that you should think, my lords

and gentlemen, that it is a question, I will tell you that it is a question; I have been in the city, which may very well be compared to Hierusalem in this conjuncture of time; and I profess those foolish citizens for a little trading and profit they will have Christ (*pointing to the soldiers on the pulpit stairs*) crucified, and that great Barabbas at St. James's—(James's, I should say)—released! But I do not much heed what the rabble say. I hope that my brethren of the clergy will be wiser; the lips of the priests do use to preserve knowledge.

"Yet, truly, I have been with them in the assembly, and now I remember I nothing doubt the presbyters are for crucifying Christ again, too, and for releasing Barabbas! But you, my lords, and you, noble gentlemen of the House of Commons; you are the sanhedrim and the great council of the nation; therefore you must be sure to do justice, and it is from you that we expect it. You must not only be the inheritors of your ancestors, but you must do as they did! They have opposed tyranny and tyrannical kings! they have destroyed them!—it is you chiefly that we look for justice from. Do not prefer the great Barabbas, murderer, tyrant, and traitor, before these poor hearts, and the army, who are our saviours; but bring him at once—bring Charles Stuart — to condign, speedy and capital punishment!

"And thereupon let me tell you a little story, not much from the matter. There was a bishop's man, at Exeter, was drunk; and a certain major laid him by the heels; the bishop sends to the major to know

by what authority he had imprisoned his servant. The major's answer was, there is an act of parliament for it, and neither the bishop nor his man are excepted out of it. Here is a great discourse and talk in the world. What! will ye cut off the king's head, the head of a protestant prince and king? Turn to your bibles, and you shall find it there—'Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' I will even answer them, as the major did the bishop: here is an act of God's!—Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed!—and I see neither King Charles, nor Prince Charles, nor Prince Rupert, nor Prince Maurice, nor any of that rabble excepted out of it!

"This is the day for which I and many saints of God besides have been praying for these many years. But if truly you do need a direct oracle from God, turn to your lesser bibles, and you shall find—the title is the Tyrant's Fall—Isaiah xiv. 18, 19, 20. 'All the kings of the nations, even all of them! lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit, as a carcass trodden under foot; because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people, the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned!'"

## CHAPTER XX.

"*Mac.*—What do ye there?
*Witches.*—A deed without a name!"

MACBETH.

INGULPH'S only comfort during this terrible exhortation was to observe that Cromwell frequently smiled derisively; and laughed nearly outright at Peters including himself among the saints. But all listened on with obdurate patience, and the sermon was succeeded by a long rhapsodical prayer, in the same key. Contrary to any reasonable hope, even the prayer finished at last; and the assembly broke up, every man hurrying half-famished to his home, to procure some more substantial food than that heavenly manna.

Cromwell lingered last of all, either absorbed in prayer, or seeming to be so, perhaps to try Ingulph's patience. But he was rooted to the ground, and awaited his uprising with such perseverance that at last he arose.

"I do think thou art of the mind to starve me outright," he said good-humouredly. "But 'tis not yet treason to conspire my death, however wilfully and maliciously! But in good truth an empty

stomach is a poor prop to such work as we have now in hand; for I do feel my heart as faint within me as a country wench's taking her grandame's night-cap for a ghost. The spirit is willing, but, oh, how weak is the flesh!"

"There was no occasion for any additional terror than you have inflicted by imprisoning De la Pole," said Ingulph, suddenly, hoping to throw the lieutenant off his guard, but he only looked at him in surprise and disappointment.

"We have him not!—'tis false, 'tis utterly false!" said Cromwell, reddening darkly; and until they were fairly out of the stream leaving the chapel, and had turned aside into the park, he said no more.

"They cajole us—they cajole us!" he said then, with agitation. "I am convinced that there is some unknown plot at work which needs but time to ripen to our destruction. De la Pole is not my prisoner! he is not to be found, however diligently sought; 'tis plain he is secreted in London, probably with Fairfax—and they are cooking a broth to scald us all!"

Much alarmed at this apprehension, which circumstances rendered very probable, Ingulph mentioned such particulars of his interview with Bulstocke as tended to re-assure the doubts about De la Pole. But Cromwell listened evidently with incredulity. He concluded his narrative with Tribulation's illness, and her earnest desire to see the lieutenant.

This last intelligence seemed somewhat to disturb the latter, but after a slight hesitation, he said that he would probably come to the city the following

morning early. "And now hasten thither, and if you would keep this man from sudden destruction, let not a cavalier dog wag his tail!" he said, hurriedly. "The first movement of De la Pole and the royalists will compel us to proceed in our work!"

On the steps of Cromwell's house they parted, and Ingulph hastened back to the city. Almost with day-break he received a command from the council of officers to post large detachments of his regiment on the Southwark shore of the river, and to take up his own quarters with them. Ireton's regiment at the same time arrived at Guildhall, ostensibly to strengthen him, and with directions that he was not to leave the city under any pretence. Imagining that some outbreak was momentarily expected, Ingulph applied himself with the greatest zeal to his task. But he was now much alarmed by intelligence which was brought him by Bulstocke, that on the previous night the lieutenant had arrived and had an interview with Tribulation; in which she confessed her deception, and the real birth of Ingulph; but had not been able to extract his intentions with regard to the king. She had taken care, however, to conceal that Ingulph was aware of his real parentage; and now besought him to remember the covenant.

The news of the day, as it rapidly reached the city, contributed to Ingulph's disquiet and mistrust. At first it was that the parliament had received the Scottish protest, the French entreaties, the queen and prince's letters, without deigning any reply.

About noonday, by ordering the substitution of one word for another in the writs and acts of government, they changed the monarchy into a republic. Shortly after a proclamation appeared declaring the throne vacant, and forbidding, under all the penalties of treason, the naming of any successor. After this immense day's work, the commons separated, and for a time those fearful rumours ceased.

Ingulph had dispatched Joyce to the council with a report of the tranquillity of the city somewhat highly-coloured, in his anxiety to diminish the evident alarm of the officers. He was partaking of a comfortless repast in the room of the Guildhall, when Joyce returned with astounding news. He could not obtain to see Cromwell, because that the High Court was sitting for the purpose of signing the sentence against the king!

At first Ingulph was thunderstruck, and could not believe the intelligence until it was confirmed by the arrival of Ireton's lieutenant, who stated that the court was busied in deliberating on the place and time of the condemned monarch's execution!

Ingulph instantly ordered his horse, and set off for Westminster in a mood which might have probably caused some outburst to his own ruin, but the length of the journey allowed him time to reflect. He saw that his only hope must still be in preserving a hold on Cromwell; and for the first time in his life he formed the deliberate purpose of dissembling his feelings, and even of assuming others opposed to them, if the necessity should arise.

Tranquil in outward appearance, he alighted at

his destination and hastened to the Painted Chamber, where he heard the High Court was assembled. The early winter twilight was already deepening into night, and two dim wax tapers burned on the council table. By far the majority of its members were present—even the fearful Downes—and Bradshaw was elaborately affixing his seal to a broad and beautifully engrossed parchment before him.

"The world shall now see whether we are a parcel of schoolboys, affrighted with our own shadows!" said Bradshaw, triumphantly. "Or whether, like a company of barn-players, we have undertaken parts whose grandeur doth more plainly show our meanness and insufficiency. I have signed it."

"Truly, and as fairly as I did ever see your hand set to a common judgment, my lord," said Cook, who stood behind. Cromwell stretched out his hand to take the parchment, but Bradshaw methodically handed it to his next man—the Lord Grey. At this moment, Ingulph approached the table, and Cromwell started as his eye fell upon him.

"What news from the city, Master Dethewarre?" he said, after an instant's pause.

"All is as tranquil as a good man's conscience," replied he, calmly. "But what are the news here, for men are marvelling in the city."

"To-morrow, Ingulph, your long-sought republic is a thing, and not a name!" said Cromwell, in a low tone. "Give me a pen!—or am I to write with my finger?"

"You have one, master lieutenant!" said Marten, with a smile. "And now for a specimen of thy

fairest Roman text-hand, for all time will judge of thy calligraphy by this."

Cromwell paused, as if steadying his mind and hand to the purpose, and Marten leaned curiously over the table, as if to mark how he would go through his task. Cromwell suddenly looked up, and in a sportive manner drew his pen across Marten's forehead, in transverse directions. Then laughing at the success of his trick, he wrote his name rapidly and in a very clear and elegant hand, while Marten smilingly vowed vengeance, and wiped his brows.

Several commissioners signed, and then it came to Ireton's turn. But exchanging a congratulatory look with Dethewarre, he did not sign until he had read the document aloud. From that perusal, Ingulph learned that the execution was to take place on the following day, in the open street, before the king's own palace of Whitehall; a common addition to a criminal's punishment in those days being to execute him at his own residence.

"Vivat respublica!" exclaimed Ireton, as he signed it. "Let England be a republic but a dozen years, and not a throne in Europe shall remain! Ingulph, sign next to me; we have been as brothers in our labours; and let posterity see our brotherhood in this bracket."

He was about to draw some such enclosure, to contain Ingulph's name with his own, when Cromwell suddenly stopped his hand.

"Dethewarre hath private wrongs to avenge; therefore he shall not sign in a public cause!" said he, austerely. "And now, Hutchinson, 'tis your

turn, but beware that you do not soil your white fingers in the penmanship."

"Let none of us soil the whiteness of our souls *after*," replied he, sedately.

"What is thy coat of arms to seal with, Pride?" said Cromwell, as it came to that worthy's turn, and he produced a huge seal.

"It is a naked babe in a brewer's arms, who hath just found him in a heap of smoking grain!" said Marten, alluding to Pride's birth, who was a foundling.

"What mean ye, sirs?" said Pride, stopping short, and looking sternly up.

"Tell them, good lad, that you wear your coat of arms on your back," said Cromwell, but observing that the soldier still looked gloomily, he added in a tone of authority—"Write on, write on! What the fiend, there are few of us here that pretend to have grandfathers!"

"There are few of you here to whom any circumstance can add greatness!" said Milton, who stood near Cromwell's chair.

"Well said, master poet," said Cromwell, looking back. "We may perchance need thy goosequill, too, in the cause. Were it not a task meet for thee? Kings the accusers—England the accused—Milton the defender—and all time the judge!"

"Oh, that the light of these orbs would but last me out such a labour; I would sit in darkness contentedly, even to the hour when the grave shall behold the glory of the Lord!" returned the poet.

"Blessed be His name, that I have lived to bear

this shining testimony!" exclaimed Harrison. "And for the coming of the Lord of light, perchance 'tis not so distant as carnal men may hope!"

Shortly after it came to Marten's turn to sign; but by this time, Cromwell had sunk into a deep reverie, which gave Marten the opportunity suddenly to return the compliment he had received, by flourishing a letter on the general's musing forehead.

"Thou art a graceless rogue!" said Cromwell, smiling absently. "But go on, go on; let us get it done."

"God knows what we are signing here, and when it may come against us!" said Downes, taking the pen with a trembling hand.

"Do you mislike to sign?—Then do not, if it be against your conscience!" said Cromwell, sternly.

"Nay, since the rest have done it, 'tis not for me to prefer my single judgment to so many wiser men's," replied Downes, very submissively.

"Were I not well convinced this deed is more pleasing to angels than to men, I would rather sign my damnation than it!" said Scot, and wrote his name.

"'Tis a necessary clearing of the way!" said Carew, a fifth-monarchist; the signatures continued to be affixed for some moments in silence.

"What! is the work stopped? What is it?" said Cromwell, suddenly starting up. "Who will not write?"

"I am the last, and I *will* write," said Miles Corbet. "Fear ye not; at the great day, I will not disavow this hand of mine."

"Where are St. John and Vane?" said Cromwell, in a musing discontented manner.

"Oh, they are fearful disciples, that come but in the night!" said Marten.

"Cursed be he who holdeth back his sword from blood!" exclaimed Harrison.

"That word is never off thy lips, methinks," said Cromwell, peevishly.

"It is done, then!" said Bradshaw.

"A word more in season to-morrow night," said Cromwell. "The axe and the scaffold are now all that are needed; and the sun shall behold the grandest act of justice which hath been inflicted since he came shining forth on the formless infinite."

But the perturbed and anxious expression of his countenance seemed somewhat to belie this triumphant speech, and his eye dwelt on Ingulph with an earnest searchingness which the settled calm of his aspect baffled.

"To whom must the warrant be directed? We must have men of tried metal," said Ireton.

"To me then!—Let me have some share in the glorious work!" said Ingulph, with wild eagerness.

"To thee?" said Cromwell, glancing at him; and adding, after a long and peculiar pause,—"No, you shall have the guard of the scaffold, and the general care of matters; but Hacker and Phray are fit men to do the vulgar offices."

"And where shall we bury him?" said Ireton. "For we must not leave his carcass to be shown, like Cæsar's, to the mob."

"Anon of that," said Cromwell, springing up. "But now these tidings must be spread, and it behoves us to be at our posts. I'll to the general, for we *must* have his good will in the matter! You, Dethewarre, to the city, and keep the soft heads there in order, and mark you, instantly!—for I do command you as a soldier under my obedience—and not to stir thence till *I* send for you to attend the execution to-morrow."

Ingulph bowed with an appearance of implicit submission; and the assembly proceeded to determine the time and place of the execution. The latter was suggested by Ingulph. He observed that the Banqueting Hall was at once the most public site, and communicated with the king's apartments, in which he might be lodged till the execution, as in a more secure spot than St. James's Palace.

"Nay, he is well guarded there—not a mouse creeps in but my ears prick!" said Cromwell, austerely. "Yet, God knows, we have infinite treacheries to apprehend!—De la Pole and the cavaliers are busy—the Lord General is in the sulks—and we have bosom-serpents, too, ready to dart their stings! He shall only re-enter his palace for his execution—to-morrow!"

The words sunk like a mountain-weight on Ingulph's heart; but he ventured no farther opposition. The assembly shortly afterwards separated, and Ingulph left Westminster Hall without any unseemly hurry, and even seemed to listen to an enthusiastic outburst from Harrison, lauding the completion of the great work.

Pausing in a real hell of contending thoughts in the Hall, which was now deserted by all but a few sentinels, Ingulph endeavoured to form some clear idea of his own vast but vague project; lost in this meditation, he did not notice the approach of Cromwell until suddenly he stood before him.

"Have you seen your mother—truly called Tribulation—to day?" he said, with a stern penetrating look.

"She is too ill to see any one. I have not," replied Ingulph, with supernatural firmness, meeting and repelling the suspicions in Cromwell's gaze.

"I saw her last night—but she is gone mad on the covenant, and raved," said Cromwell, hastily. "But wherefore are you not hurrying on my order to the city? The malignants and the citizens are doubtless brewing some plot together, which but for this suddenness of ours—and Fairfax's wife grows hourly more insolent in her hen-pecking—and the Scots muster—and France mutters—why are you still here?"

"I have a dying message from Tribulation to Master Stonehenge, which I will hastily deliver, and then——"

"I misdoubt if he apprehends you, but lose no time!" said Cromwell, ominously. "I shall send one shortly to the city with instructions for you."

Cromwell retired so suddenly, that his absorbed companion started to find that he was gone; and then he hastened on alone to Whitehall.

## CHAPTER XXI.

> "Now see that noble and most sovereign reason
> Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh;
> Mad as the sea and winds when both contend
> Which is the mightier."
>
> HAMLET.

THUS then it had terminated—after so many toils and sufferings, when the goal was in reach, the glory nigh achieved, the grand vision an actuality, the youthful republic about to start forth ready armed from the working brain of that prodigious age—the main instrument found himself compelled to put all again at stake, or to become a parricide!

The project which Ingulph's maddened fancy had conceived was not altogether without some feasibility. The recollection of the secret communication between the old and new palaces of Whitehall occurred to him like a supernatural irradiation during the process of signing the sentence. It was therefore he had proposed the Banqueting Hall as a fit place for the execution. It was with no idea of seeing Stonehenge, but another and contrary purpose, that he now hastened to Holbein's Gate.

The towers and central building had remained unoccupied since De la Pole and he resided in it. The

very existence of the passage, obscurely alluded to in the trial after Ramona's abduction, was now forgotten, and the communication by its means with the old palace was unknown. To ascertain with certainty what he might trust to, was now Ingulph's object.

His uniform was a sufficient pass with the sentinels, and Ingulph made his way unquestioned into the deserted tower. The tapestry had been securely nailed over the sliding pannel, but it was easily torn away. He entered the corridor, traversed the still untenanted gallery and corridors, and came to the grand staircase which formed the junction between the ancient and modern palaces. Turning, as formerly, to the left, leaving on the right the royal chambers, terminating in the banqueting hall, he speedily reached the ruins which intervened to Stonehenge's tower.

But while pausing to survey the possibility of passing over them to the laboratory, his eye suddenly encountered a figure standing on the opposite side of a deep reft, which had once been a gallery, the sight of which produced an effect on Ingulph something akin to the terror of a supernatural presence.

It was Stonehenge. His countenance was perfectly bloodless, or rather of a leaden purple, and all the muscles were drawn upwards, as if in union with his wild bolt-upright hair; a peculiar hyena-like expression played in a direful smile all over his visage but the lips. He fixed his eyes on Ingulph, and they seemed gradually to dilate to a prodigious size,

rounding continually, and shining with a fearful, mad, laughing expression, as if conscious of the detection he had made of Ingulph's purpose.

Ingulph felt that he could not, without great danger, relax his gaze for an instant, for he seemed as if Stonehenge were meditating a spring at him. He therefore fixed his eyes steadily and unquailingly upon him; but it lasted so long that his agitation almost overpowered him, when suddenly Stonehenge gathered back all the terrors of his gaze, and he laughed in a low, soft, vacant manner for some moments.

"Be not afraid, since it is so, nephew," he said at last, with a mixture of astonishment and pleasure. "The dark divinity, I find, has not yet vanquished the bright one in you, and I have no power over you; but I expected you here, and have come to meet you; but lest we should not agree have removed all the planks."

"Expected me!—wherefore?" said Ingulph, with as much calmness as he could muster. "How could you think to find me here now, when I am so busy?"

"Why, so am I busy—very busy!" said Stonehenge, pettishly, but seeming to listen attentively. "How the wind sighs through these ruins!—did you hear anything like a groan?"

"Nay—nought," said Ingulph, much alarmed.

"Still I thought I did hear some one moaning!" said Stonehenge. "Methinks 'tis very strange, considering how I glut them with the fat of the land; and then to tease me for a morsel of bread or a

drink of water, with the richest wines and delicatest cates before them!"

"Speak you of your wife?" said Ingulph.

"And of her friends!" replied Stonehenge. "Think you we would either of us be lacking in hospitality?"

"Certainly, no," said Ingulph, soothingly.

"Know you to whom you speak?" continued Stonehenge, with an air of irritation.

"Some men call you Stonehenge—others the Earl De la Pole," said Ingulph, striving to humour him.

"I am both and neither!—but 'tis not yet given me to appear in my proper character, environed by the lightnings and thunder—I am the avenger!" said Stonehenge, drawing himself up into an attitude which though insane was sublime in its authority and grandeur.

"But as I have not wronged you, you can have no business with me now, in that capacity," returned Ingulph, in a resolute tone; but he paused, observing the sudden eagerness with which Stonehenge looked at him.

"Oh, I know you have not come to see my wife now; I am not busied with the stars as I used to be, for they are now accustomed to my sway," he said. "'Tis easy to govern myriads of worlds, on certain principles which Galileo taught me: only of this be assured, thought has no master but death!"

"But your business with me?" said Ingulph, with melancholy earnestness.

"Speak loudly and roughly; I like not these whin-

ing sounds!" said Stonehenge, sharply. "You may imagine how little they please me, when I tell you my only delight is listening to the clank of the gates of hell as they open to receive my victims, and the roar of the flames of the abyss!—But you are not of the illuminati—you are here on an errand of mercy—in the hope to save your father."

These latter words were pronounced in so sedate and reasonable a tone, that it seemed as if the naturally strong mind of Stonehenge had suddenly thrown off the influence of its disease.

"To save my father!—how is that possible, unless I could stay a mountain rolling from the Alps?" said Ingulph, much startled.

"The secret passage—the royal chambers!" replied Stonehenge. "Methinks a son should attempt something to save his sire's life, even if it cost him his own, and like a brood of snakes they stung one another to death."

"How mean you?" said Ingulph, with a troubled glance; and as he spoke, to his infinite surprise, Stonehenge's eyes gushed full of tears, and an expression of intense grief convulsed all his features.

"But it must be—it must be!" he said, after a pause, "or the power of evil will never forgive—never release me from the vultures of memory and consciousness! But if you have forgotten that you are his son—I have not that he was once my friend—my dearest friend!"

"And you would yet—you would aid in an attempt to preserve him?" said Ingulph, with a wild gleam of hope darting in upon him.

"Such as restoring these planks—sleeping hard while you guide the king through my tower to the water-edge, where surely some friend will bring a boat to take him to Montacute's vessel?" said Stonehenge.

"And you will do this?" said Ingulph, in a tumult of hope.

"On one condition," replied Stonehenge.

"If it be my heart's blood, it is yours!"

"Let not the Lord De la Pole have art or part in it!" said Stonehenge, with a strong shudder.

"Now do I believe you are in earnest. He shall not—and I deem he could not, being in all probability a secret prisoner of the council!" replied Ingulph.

Stonehenge smiled, but it was bleakly and dismally as the sun on a sterile mountain, to which it seems to bestow neither light nor warmth.

The brightness of his once clear reason seemed to have returned; he discussed the details of the daring project with a minuteness which convinced Ingulph that he had carefully studied it in all its bearings. He spoke too with a mournful tenderness of his old friendship for the king, which bore no traces of his usual bitterness; and encouraged by the mildness of his tone, Ingulph ventured to tell him the particulars which he had learned in extenuation of Charles's conduct from the confession of the Marquis of Montacute.

"If you have invented this—what avails heaping more fire on my head?" said Stonehenge, with a return of his wildness. "But even so—her name

blasted—was it for him to inflict that measureless dishonour on me, that my sister—my only sister—but what of that? My wife! We must appease the power which is now in ascendancy; I have made a compact."

The arrangements were rapidly concerted. The great essential was, that Ingulph should be assured of the command of the immediate guard on the king. Stonehenge intimated his suspicions that Cromwell would withdraw the appointment from Ingulph, whom he knew he doubted, and was besides desirous to preserve from any share in his father's death. It was therefore necessary to obtain Lady Fairfax's co-operation, so far as to induce her husband to grant the warrant to Ingulph, to be used in case of necessity, despite of any supercession.

The king would certainly be allowed some time to rest in his chamber, and to prepare himself for his exit, the guard waiting in the chambers and passages beyond, leading to the banqueting hall. The great gallery would probably be occupied; but under pretext of avoiding the influx of strangers, its portals might be secured, and sentinels only posted within. Thence, under Ingulph's guidance, the way to the tower might easily be reached, and Stonehenge would secretly make preparations to facilitate the passage. A boat was to be in waiting for the fugitive; and immediately he reached it, Ingulph was to return to the guards, under pretence to leave the king to his devotions, and thus give them security that he was within. He was to prevent any entry up to the last moment, and when it could no longer

be delayed, he was himself to make the discovery of the king's evasion, and misdirect the search. Two objects were to be attained by this artifice—Ingulph's own exoneration, and time to perfect the royal escape.

When this compact was made, the unwonted conspirators separated, Ingulph remembering his agreement with Cromwell, and fearing to awaken suspicion by not being found at his post. So calm and rational was Stonehenge's manner that Ingulph wondered how he had ever imagined him to be insane, however strange were his fancies in religion. Nevertheless he did not venture once to allude to Ramona, otherwise than in the distant way we have set down at the commencement of the conversation.

Terrible as was the risk of the conspiracy into which he had now so strangely entered, Ingulph hesitated not a moment on that score. Immediately on the king's escape being discovered, it was his resolution to appear on the scaffold—proclaim the republic unstained with blood—and take whatever might ensue. His own soldiers were devoted to him, and were to surround the scaffold. And his chief apprehensions were only lest Stonehenge should fail in some manner in his part of the affair—lest his mind should relapse—for Ingulph never dreamed of treachery. But he thought of a means to provide against this risk too.

Returning with great rapidity to the city, he luckily arrived before Cromwell's messenger; who brought some vague directions for him to bring with

him on the following day only so many of his troops as could be safely spared.

Immediately after the messenger had departed, feigning weariness of the weight of his arms, he changed his garb for that of a civilian. He directed Joyce to have his soldiers warned and in readiness for their important office on the following day; and sent orders to Bulstocke to attend him early in the morning, to consult about the best means of preserving the peace of the city.

The next thoughts were to complete his arrangements for the king's flight; and almost for the first time he grieved at the disappearance of De la Pole. His activity, his courage, and infinite dexterity would have been invaluable. Cromwell's solemn disavowal of any knowledge of his detention made Ingulph revert to his first opinion, that the royalists had concealed him, and could easily produce him if they chose.

The probability that he was concealed at Northumberland House had frequently occurred to him, although the thought to him was full of bitterness, since the victim bride dwelt there too. Hitherto Ingulph had scarcely dared to think of Lady De la Pole, lest he should in some manner involve her in the dangerous plots forming by and with him. But he knew that De la Pole would have no such tenderness; and the probabilities that some wild plot was forming among the cavaliers under his guidance, and the necessity of Montacute's co-operation, obliged him to think of some means of opening a communication with them.

Lady Fairfax's devotion to the king, and correspondence with the De la Poles, suggested her as the readiest and safest; and moreover her concurrence was essential to obtaining from Fairfax the necessary powers. It was true that the lord general's cowed genius could not be expected to take an active part in favour of the king, whom yet in his heart he would have pitied and saved—but covertly his assistance might be expected, and was of eminent necessity.

Considering these arguments, Ingulph returned as privately as possible, and in by-ways, to that part of the palace of Whitehall occupied by Fairfax.

On arriving, he learned that the lord general had gone to attend a council of the officers at the Mews, and that his lady had given strict orders that no one should be admitted to her presence. He interpreted these tidings, that the officers were met to confirm their wavering general in his support of their proceedings, and that the Lady Fairfax thus expressed her disgust and hatred of them.

Not discouraged by the intelligence, he sent in his name, and an earnest request to be allowed to speak with her ladyship on business of the utmost importance. A peremptory denial was instantly returned, with Lady Fairfax's command to show Colonel Dethewarre to the junto of officers, which she supposed he came to attend. Fearing that no other means would prevail, Ingulph sent in a still more urgent request, adding that his business related to the Lord De la Pole. This hint, he thought, would

suit either the lady's knowledge of his concealment by his friends or seizure by his enemies.

Some time elapsed ere the page sent in with the message returned with instructions, as he had anticipated, to admit him. He was led into the apartment we have formerly described, and there he found —not only Lady Fairfax, but Marie and the Marquis of Montacute!

The latter was pale, worn, and so altered by time and trouble, that Ingulph at first imagined that his eyes deceived him.

"Ingulph! if there be any human feeling in your heart, forgive me, and tell me—is my son alive or dead?" exclaimed the unhappy nobleman, and the agonized earnestness of his manner convinced Ingulph that he was sincere in his profession of ignorance.

"If I knew, Lord Montacute, I should not now be here to inquire," said Ingulph, after a moment's pause of surprise, not unmingled with other feelings.

"Ingulph, we have all—I have wronged you—bitterly, inhumanly wronged you!" exclaimed the marquis distractedly, kneeling and clasping his hands. "But in the name of the God of mercy, at least tell me what has become of him! Any thing is better than what I fear!"

"Ingulph!—Ingulph! remember our compact, and be merciful!" said Marie, kneeling too, in her agony of supplication.

"The word be my last, if I speak not truth when I say, I know nought of him!" exclaimed Ingulph,

snatching her up, and more temperately aiding the exhausted old man to rise. "Lord Montacute, for the injuries you have done me, I have not, perchance, long to suffer their consequences; and for a few brief hours I may well anticipate the forgiveness of death. I know nothing of your son's disappearance, so may God help me when my hour comes!"

"Who, then, can doubt it?—He has fallen into the hands of the mad fiend, Stonehenge—the knight of De la Pole—whatever he calls himself!" exclaimed the wretched father.

"In that at least I may comfort you," said Ingulph, "and therewith explain my purpose; but the king's life, and mine, and all our lives, perchance, are in it. Are we assured we have no listeners?"

"None—no more—be brief, sir!" said Lady Fairfax, turning pale. "Does it concern Thomas—my husband, the lord general, speak hastily, for I tremble as if I were on the scaffold to lay down my own life."

Ingulph was not found tedious by his anxious listeners, and as he expounded the particulars of the plot, wonder seemed gradually to become the dominant feeling. Montacute returned with satisfaction to the fear which was probably least terrible to him of many—that his son was secretly confined by the council. Although a devoted royalist, it was easy to perceive that he regarded the king's escape chiefly as a means of effecting the discovery of his son, in the midst of the confusion which must ensue; or, in the probable event of some compromise, securing his preservation.

The marquis eagerly embraced the part assigned to him in the project, to be in waiting secretly with a boat and a few determined followers, at the old palace stairs—and in the event of any change in Stonehenge, assisting to overpower him. If the wind were favourable to a voyage out of the river, they were to take the king on board at Gravesend; if not, to some place on the sea-coast, whither the ship might attend him if his embarkation should continue necessary.

But Montacute evidently imagined that the king's escape would be the signal for an outburst which must either restore him, or bring his enemies to some negotiation. Lady Fairfax's courage seemed, however, rather to sink on the approach of danger. She inquired, with a faltering voice, what part her husband was expected to take, and declared she knew it was impossible to engage him in any direct share in it. Ingulph satisfied her fears on this point, by desiring her only to obtain from her lord an appointment for him to attend the king, and to superintend the guard at the execution, despite any orders from Cromwell or the council of war. For this she needed only to allege the king's personal desire to that effect; but if possible, Fairfax ought to be on the spot to protect him from any personal violence from the soldiery, in case of a failure.

Lady Fairfax eagerly promised all this, and Montacute declared that as many cavaliers as might without suspicion, should mingle with the mob on the following day, to aid as far as lay in their power. As a means of increasing the confusion, Ingulph

was not displeased with the proposal, though for other reasons he disliked it.

There was no hope of giving the king notice of what was going forward—all his attendants being as much imprisoned as himself. The moment of his redemption must also be that in which he first heard of the possibility. This was, indeed, a fearful concussion of events and feelings, but no better could be done.

Marie spoke hardly a word during the discussion, though her tears flowed incessantly. But when Ingulph at last arose to depart, regardless of the presence of her husband's father, she rushed into his arms, pressed her pallid lips to his, and exclaimed aloud: "Be it life—be it death—we will never part again—if ever we meet again! One grave they cannot deny us!"

Ingulph pressed her to his heart, which swelled full to bursting, and without venturing any reply, rushed out.

Shortly after, he found himself, he remembered not how, one of a vast stream of populace flowing towards the Banqueting Hall. Barriers of massive timber were erected at intervals along the line of the palace, and a temporary wall of planks before the great window of Whitehall concealed the operations of numerous workmen within, whose blows echoed so loudly that Ingulph could scarcely doubt they must reach the hearing of the devoted sovereign. The grim skeleton of a scaffold was gradually rising before the palace, visible in faint snatches of moonlight, or in the broader glare of torches.

Vast as was the populace, a deep silence reigned, excepting the blows of the hammers, and the tramp of innumerable feet. Terror was the predominant feeling, and appeared legibly in the white visages and haggard eyes with which the boldest regarded each other. Death seemed to threaten each man in particular; a vague awe and expectation swayed men's minds, as if the sky had suddenly become black at noonday, or some unknown and monstrous phenomena threatened universal destruction. Who could believe in the stability of his own existence, when one of the mightiest monarchs of the earth was about to fall beneath the axe of the executioner? Every blow of the hammer—every stroke of the dull mace securing the scaffold—was distinctly audible in the terror-struck silence. Ingulph felt for the first time the full reach of the tremendous policy of Cromwell—the depth of the foundation of terror he was casting—on which the new order of things was to rise. It troubled him to think how much frailer and meaner a basis he was obliged to substitute.

## CHAPTER XXII.

"Shorn of his beams, the sun
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs."

MILTON.

INGULPH spent nearly all that night in mentally welding the parts of his great plot, and what remained of it in a restless sleep such as condemned men usually take on the eve of their doom. Dreams of infinite horror haunted him, in which, mingling his scholastic recollections with actual impressions, he sometimes fancied himself driven, like Orestes, by the furies, armed with their scorpion whips, and yelling—parricide!—until the universe seemed to take up the shout, and hoot him madly into regions of infinite and icy silence and desolation.

Anon, a city of refuge was before him—in the sky, surrounded by a celestial landscape of the purest fire. But to reach it, he had to climb a mountain of black sand which perpetually sunk beneath his climbing feet, and threatened every moment to smother him in its depths. A silver hand was stretched out to him, and hurried him irresistibly to the summit; but the landscape vanished, and he

only saw the palace of Whitehall involved in a vast whirlwind of fire, and Stonehenge appeared on the summit of his tower, laughing and clapping his hands until he sunk in the flames.

Starting from this fearful phantasy, Ingulph beheld the first pale peep of that great day—the 30th of January. It was a cold and sleety dawn, the sky obscured with heavy snow-clouds, whence from time to time the powerless sun appeared like a huge bloody shield.

Ingulph determined to attempt resting no longer; and commenced attiring himself. But although as he donned his armour, the thought occurred to him how probably it was for the last time, his resolution quailed not in the least. Religion was the master-spring of the time; its virtues, its crimes, even its madness, grew from that common root; and Ingulph's sublime fanaticism dreamed now that the Deity had selected him for the task he was upon.

Despite his anxiety, he patiently awaited until the petronel from the Tower announced the commencement of the military day. Very shortly after, Joyce knocked at the door to inform him that a messenger had arrived from Whitehall.

On entering, this personage proved to be the once proud Marquis of Montacute, now in the garb of a common runner. But he brought good news. Lady Fairfax found her husband exceedingly well disposed to save the king, provided it could be effected without risk to himself or his authority. She had not dared to confide the plan concerted to him, but he had readily granted her the order for Ingulph to

command in chief in all the arrangements at the king's execution. She would take care that he should be at hand on any emergency, and would herself not be far remote.

Montacute had made all the necessary preparations on his part. His vessel was prepared to sail, and a contrivance which he had used to conceal himself on board was to be used by the king. Half a dozen determined men would be in waiting with himself and a boat at the old stairs, where his presence, in the absorbing spectacle on land, would scarcely be noticed, or construed into some government precaution. Northumberland's retainers, and as many of the king's friends as could be warned without danger, would be scattered among the spectators, ready to aid in any manner, and looking to Dethewarre for instructions.

Ingulph assured Montacute that all went well on his part, and they parted coldly and mistrustingly, but with outward civility, as enemies reconciled by the force of circumstances,—not by will.

Joyce, in obedience to instructions, had now assembled all the serjeants of the regiment, and led them into the presence of their young colonel, nearly all the higher officers being with the detachments. Ingulph read them the commission he had received from the lord general, which he declared to be a very great and singular honour to the whole regiment; more especially as it was likely to be a dangerous one, as the malignants, it might naturally be expected, would make an attempt to hinder the just judgment about to be executed. He therefore

cautioned them, whatever happened, to support the cause of the republic, to look to him alone for guidance in all exigencies, and to stand faithfully by him in all the measures which circumstances might compel him to adopt.

"If it be to slay the bull of Bashan with mine own partizan, say but the word!" exclaimed one of the agitators; and a deep murmur of assent expressed the general feeling.

Dismissing these military devotees to spread the tidings among the soldiers, and school them with the same lessons, Ingulph now anxiously awaited the arrival of Bulstocke. Nothing could better demonstrate the general panic, than the circumstance that, knowing all that he knew, still Bulstocke thought proper to read the message in an extensive sense, and came accompanied by nearly all his brother aldermen.

Ingulph took advantage of the circumstance, and impressed upon the civic dignitaries, that, during his absence, the peace of the city was looked to from their vigilance. To effect this purpose, he authorized them to distribute instructions to the trained bands to hold themselves in readiness at a moment's summons—the trained bands which had been violently suppressed by the council of officers! The magistrates received this command with great humility, surprise, and satisfaction; and Bulstocke was huddling out with the rest from the presence of the young dictator, when Ingulph recalled him, and briefly informed him of the project formed for the king's rescue. Such was the joy of the worthy

citizen, that he could not forbear dancing about the room in an ecstasy, and declaring that the news would recover Tribulation, although she was sinking fast.

Ingulph could hardly sober him down to understand the part which he desired him to take in the proceedings; which was, to procure that the attendance from the city, which would undoubtedly be very great, should look to him as to one favourable to the king, and support him in the measure of proclaiming a republic, which was the only one which could prevent a concussion between the city and the army. As soon as the king's escape was certain, they were to assemble the train bands under pretext of his present orders, and confer on him the command.

Bulstocke joyfully assented to all that was proposed; and in conclusion produced a bottle and a little hamper which he had concealed under his cloak, full of excellent materials for breakfast, of which he insisted that Ingulph should partake. "My old dame knew you would have nothing worth eating here," he said, with a jolly smile. "And, heaven knows, it may be the last meal we shall eat, so it should be a good one."

Ingulph reminded him that they must not seem too friendly; but the disappointment in honest Bulstocke's visage on the remark moved him, and he poured out a cup of the wine, and pledged him with assumed cheerfulness. Yet at the moment the thought was in his heart, full of regret and bitterness, that, born with a soul so keenly sensitive to every

delight, he was about to pass away without having tasted any.

Almost immediately after Bulstocke had taken his departure, to Ingulph's surprise, he received an order from Cromwell to hasten to Westminster. By this time the soldiers were drawn up in the street before Guildhall, with their naked swords glittering in the frosty air. Ingulph's appearance was the signal for a general outburst of enthusiasm, and cries of "We will live and die with our colonel!" rang along the ranks as he marshalled their lines. Ingulph felt that he could depend on his soldiers, and a glow of better hope warmed his bosom.

Early as it was, great numbers swept continually past the end of the street, along Cheapside; but no one paused, or seemed to notice the military array, usually so attractive to the masses. The hurrying multitudes whom they passed on their way to Whitehall seemed hardly to pay them more attention. Those who glanced at them did so fearfully and by stealth, as if afraid to call the attention of the king-destroyers to themselves. As yet only the poorest classes of the population, or persons disguised as such, were abroad. Mechanics, disbanded soldiers, shivering beggars, who would not on that day exchange their rags for the royal mantle of England, went muttering along, amazedly wondering at the prodigious turn of the wheel which had dashed the mightiest in the land even so low as to need their pity.

Persons of better degree began gradually to checquer the masses. The citizen wrapped in his

sober cloak, with his huge pointed hat; the ruined cavalier, still distinguished by an air of jauntiness in his tatters, and by the reckless desperate expression of his countenance; the presbyter, with his woe-begone and puzzled visage; the triumphant fanatic, whose joy was only betrayed by increased sternness and gloom of visage, as if in fear that his exultation should break forth, and seem to arrogate something of the glory of the Lord's work. Every alley, street, and by-path, kept pouring in its quota; women and children, innumerable apprentices with their quarter-staves, all usually so loquacious, now hurried along in utter silence, without laugh or whistle, or jest or quarrel, as if hastening from some common danger. The most bitter animosities of sect and party seemed lulled by the spell of fear; as when an American savannah is on fire, the snake, the buffalo, the panther, and man, the common enemy, speed along together without molestation or notice of each other, in the brotherhood of terror.

At length Whitehall appeared, the vast space before the palace so densely crowded, that Ingulph had some difficulty in making way for his troops without trampling the multitude. Prepared and resolved as he was, the blood ran coldly through his veins when he first caught sight of the scaffold, which now appeared above the planks around. It was not yet completed; workmen were busy hanging it with black, and in removing the framework used in its erection. The regiment of foot soldiers which already occupied the esplanade, seemed unable to keep it, for the mob crowded incessantly over the

space intended to be kept clear, in utter disregard of the liberal blows bestowed among them with the blunt ends of pikes.

Ingulph, with great difficulty, and by the formidable pressure of his cavalry, succeeded in clearing the space round the scaffold. Curses loud and deep, yells, shrieks and imprecations, resounded on every side; but the weight of man and horse, and the terror of brandished swords, at length prevailed. The discontented populace were hemmed back in a circle, and began to deal their rage and blows on one another, as the nearest efficient causes of their common sufferings.

Ingulph, observing that the foot regiment was Fairfax's, shewed his commission to the officer commanding, and ordered him to place his men so as to line the whole range of the palace front, and to let no one go out or enter without a pass-word, which he now gave of "God and the Republic." His own troop he planted ten deep around the scaffold, reserving only a small body for another purpose. The whole line of the park between Whitehall and St. James's was already occupied by long gleaming lines of horsemen, and pikes and streamers on lanced poles.

Ingulph gallopped along this line, as if to ascertain that it was well kept, and saw, with little satisfaction, that regiments the most devoted to the council of officers lined it. But no suspicions of his own intentions seemed entertained. The commanders saluted him with the usual warmth, for he was a general favourite with all; and on his return to the scaffold, he found

the three officers to whom the warrant was directed—Phayre, Huncks, and Hacker, awaiting him to receive his instructions.

The scaffold was not yet completed, and together they ascended it, Ingulph affecting great zeal and hurry for its completion. From this elevated point the gathering of the crowd was distinctly visible, and he watched its gradual formation with an anxiety which may be imagined.

Whether it was fancy or reality we know not, but it seemed to Ingulph as if the quality of men's opinions settled them in distinct circles around the scaffold. The wildest of the fanatics, those who looked upon the king's death as a sublime sacrifice of a sweet savour to the Lord, thronged the nearest, and gazed upward with haggard visages and fiery eyes, as if athirst for the blood that was to be shed. Next to them were the milder shades and hues of doubters and trimmers, including the great majority of the citizens; then again the retainers of great houses, ragged cavaliers, full of desperation and fear. But these distinctions gradually mingled away, and fierce uproar ever and anon arose, as persons or opinions came into angry collision. Over all, the soldiery preserved a sedate and melancholy composure, like men marked out by supreme intelligence to fulfil a great but sorrowful duty.

From the scaffold into the palace was an easy passage, an entire window being removed, and Ingulph found that the banqueting hall, into which it opened, the galleries and corridors leading to the king's

apartments, were lined with soldiers. Without troubling himself on this score, although he remarked that they were all fanatics of the darkest hue, Ingulph proceeded to occupy the apartment which he destined for the king, with dismounted soldiers of his regiment. This was a momentous point, and his heart beat quick when he entered the suite lest some obstruction should arise; but none was offered; and after affecting to search the whole range as far as the grand staircase communicating with the deserted part of the palace, he locked all the doors, and returned.

Ingulph had hoped to avoid seeing Cromwell, and to have an opportunity of sounding Fairfax, by procuring, direct from the lord-general, the warrant for the delivery of the king's person. There was no longer time for hesitation. The bulky and resolute Hacker came to him with tidings that the scaffold was nearly completed, and that it was advisable to bring the king from St. James's before the crowd became fixed.

"I will seek the lord-general for our warrant then," said Ingulph, hastily; "and in good time here he comes."

As he spoke Fairfax entered the banqueting hall, accompanied by two officers of rank, with a severe and troubled countenance. As Ingulph approached, he started, and seemed inclined to avoid him, but he would not allow the manœuvre.

"Is not your commission ample? What more do you want with me, what more?" exclaimed the

lord-general, in an agitated voice. "Ye have done it all yourselves so far, and finish it! You have the troops under your order—what more do you want?"

"The warrant for delivering the king's person into our hands," said Ingulph, with an earnest look, which Fairfax either did not or would not understand.

"Go to the lieutenant—the whole matter rests with him—I will have nothing to do with it; it is the army's doings," replied the general, hurriedly; but he added in a calmer tone, "he will readily give it you, I doubt not, if *not*, apply to me, I shall be hereabouts—but I will have nothing to do in this bloody business;" and he hastened away, with his attendants.

Thus compelled, Ingulph inquired for the lieutenant, and learned that he had not yet arrived from his lodgings in the Cock-pit. Commissioning Phayre to hasten for him, he now hurried back to the scaffold, but on his way was met by Axtel.

There was a peculiar and gloomily ironical smile on the countenance of this man, as he informed Ingulph that the lieutenant had arrived, and desired his presence instantly.

He obeyed with counterfeit satisfaction, and Axtel led the way to a chamber at the end of a long corridor communicating with the banqueting hall. In the archiepiscopal times this had been an oratory of a peculiar and beautifully elaborate architecture; but it was now profaned into a bedchamber, and occupied by Ireton. The perfect calmness with which the latter regarded the tremendous event approaching may be judged from the fact that he was still in bed;

and Harrison, who had spent the night with him, was having his armour donned by one of his serjeants.

The dim light of a little oriel window shone on an arm-chair immediately below, in which sat Cromwell, laughing heartily at some observation which had just been made by his grim porter, Pordage, who stood at hand. He was dressed in a plain, civic garb, but his doublet was a little open about the breast, and the gleam of armour below was visible.

"Pordage is haunted by seventeen devils by night, he says; but 'tis all for want of one in the shape of a wife," said Cromwell, scarcely noticing the arrival in his hilarity. "But surely, Harrison, thou dost not mean to be a-bed there all day when such work is in hand?"

"Why not?—let the reaper rest while they bind the sheaves," said Ireton, yawning. "But whom have we here?—Truly, Colonel Dethewarre!—so 'tis time indeed to be up and stirring."

"I am ready at my post!" exclaimed Harrison, with a dark smile. "The great red dragon standeth ready to devour our child, but it shall not be! The blood of the slaughtered saints is adjudged and avenged! The second seal is opened; the red horse is come in his power to take peace from the earth, when the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every freeman, hide themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains, from the wrath of the Lamb!"

"Yea, brother," said Cromwell gravely, "the day

is nigh, when, as in Revelations, it shall be said, the kingdoms of the world are become the Lord's, and he shall reign for ever and ever!"

"We shall give an example to last for ever to-day," said Ireton. "Were the king as dear to me as he is hateful, as near as he is distant, my own life bound up with his, I would not grudge him to the scaffold to make the English people free for ever, as we shall to-day!"

A ray of light shone over the features of Ireton, which contrasted strongly with the gloom into which Cromwell's had now relapsed.

"Where is this hangman of yours, Axtel?—is he experienced in death?—I would not have him put to pain!" he said, hastily, without looking at Ingulph, but conscious of his presence.

"He beheaded Strafford and Laud—both neat jobs," replied Axtel, smiling. "He has had his own neck twice in the rope, and has the skill by inheritance, for his father was hangman before him."

"Then there needs nothing but the axe; we should have the broad execution-axe from the Tower," said Cromwell. "It is of proved steel, and I do hear severed the fair neck of this man's grandmother, the Scottish Mary. That Elizabeth was a brave spirit—being royal herself—to set so little store on royal blood!"

"We shall soon discern if it be richer crimson—this royal gore—than all that hath been poured over the land to keep it so!" said Ireton.

"Write your own warrant, Master Dethewarre; we will sign it," said Cromwell, suddenly turning

to Ingulph, and then averting his eyes with a deep sigh.

Ingulph deliberately took a pen which stood with other writing materials on a little table at hand, and wrote the order with perfect steadiness. Whilst thus engaged, Ireton made many questions as to how he had posted his soldiers, which he answered with the same preternatural coolness. But while occupied in this task, the party was increased by the arrival of the executioner.

He was a short-set, powerfully made man, with a parting of the upper lip, which gave him a peculiarly bloodthirsty expression. He wore a blue woollen doublet, and wide leathern hose, very greasy and mended with shapeless patches of various stuffs. For an executioner, his manner was little answerable, for he trembled all over, his knees knocked together, and he was deadly pale.

"What ails the rogue?" said Cromwell, with a contemptuous stare. "In troth, 'tis enough to put ruth out of fashion, when the hangman feels it!—How now, fellow, dar'st not earn the best day's wage thou hast ever yet received?"

"God forgive me, your honour, but I dare not do it!" replied the executioner, tremulously. "Mine arm would fail me when I raised the axe; I should but haggle him! I pray your honours pardon me; the people will not like that I should strike him often."

"The very hangman infected too!" muttered Cromwell to Ireton. "Well, sirrah, what dost thou fear?—a king's neck is no broader than a knave's;

nay, the gentle bloods do pride themselves on slender and shapely ones!—Didst thou not behead Strafford?"

"Yea, my lord; but he was but an earl, and the people did shout for joy when I did it, and wished me well through my work," replied the man.

"The people!—that was a work acceptable to men, but this to angels!" exclaimed Harrison.

"Thirty pounds is the fee," said Ireton.

"Troth, no—more or less—but it shall not be thirty!" said Cromwell, sharply.

"I could not, my lord, for a hundred thousand!—mine arm would stiffen into wood as I raised the axe!" said the executioner, dolefully. "But I have a comrade who will share the pay with me and do the deed, and I will help him as far as I may in holding up the hair, and such like, and I will lend him my tackle, an' it please you."

"And who is this bolder comrade of thine?" said Cromwell, looking suspiciously at the man.

"He bade me whisper his name only, my lord," replied the hangman, creeping up to Cromwell, who repulsed him with a gesture of horror. But after an instant's thought, he suffered him to approach. The hangman then whispered a word, at which Cromwell seemed surprised.

"Master Stonehenge vouches for his skill!" he said, musingly. "But the main thing is that he have a stout heart; send for him, we will make trial of his art."

"Prithee on whom, general?" said Ireton, with a strange glance at Ingulph.

"Nay, on a billet of wood, or some such matter!" replied Cromwell, sternly. "And now, 'tis full time the criminal were here. Are you ready, Dethewarre?"

"I am ready," replied the young colonel, with a start.

"I see thou art, and—I am glad of it," said Cromwell, with another deep sigh. "Verily, we are fallen on wonderful providences, that an army, usually the prop and stay of tyrannical princes, should be the means of bringing this tyrant to justice, against the will of the people he has oppressed! Do not stir your soldiers, Dethewarre: I have seen—they are admirably placed. Axtel will accompany you with a guard of partizans from my own regiment, which I have myself selected on the service."

Ingulph bowed, but the intelligence was far from pleasing to him.

"To what part of the palace shall we bring him? To your presence here?" said Axtel.

"No, no, I will not see him—nor would the lord-general," said Cromwell, hurriedly; and he added, with a troubled smile, "Dethewarre knows where to stow him—in his own apartments—'tis too cold a day to keep a man standing in the open air."

"Let us go then!" exclaimed Ingulph, breathing hard between his teeth.

"But harkye, Axtel!—both!—do ye hear?—suffer no man to have private speech with him!" said Cromwell, his eye dwelling earnestly on Ingulph. "I would not that any man should do his soul that wrong, to give him any earthly hope—for

I swear by the living God, that either his head or mine rolls on the block ere sunset, and all the hopes and projects of our enemies are as dust in the desart whirling against the wind!"

Ingulph made no reply, but handed the warrant for the delivery of the king's person to Cromwell, who rapidly signed it.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

> "Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
> Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,
> And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled,
> And Discord with a thousand various mouths."

Axtel and Colonel Dethewarre left the palace by way of the scaffold, on their important errand. It was an amazing spectacle to behold the immense masses which had now gathered. The whole park seemed paved with faces; and Ingulph's courage, or rather hopes, rekindled when he remembered that of that vast multitude only the armed guards desired the consummation of the deed which he had conspired to prevent.

The guard of partizans was already at St. James's, and the two officers proceeded thither on foot. The exceeding agitation and pressure of the crowd showed that they understood what was taking place, and all eyes watched the progress of Ingulph's stalwart figure along the line with intense interest. The confusion became so great that it was with difficulty the soldiers kept their posts, and great uproar ensued, the mob being so firmly wedged that they could not fall back even when the horsemen urged

their steeds almost upright on the haunches against them.

"Master Dethewarre, for old acquaintance sake, let me stand here!" exclaimed a female voice, which Ingulph thought he recollected; and glancing round he perceived Madam Tomkins, very shabbily attired, whom a soldier was amusing himself in menacing with his drawn sword, to make her descend from a position she had achieved on a hillock of rubbish.

"I'd thank you, at all events, neighbour, to take your elbows out of my ribs!" said another female, against whom she was driven. Ingulph recognised Mistress Chaloner, much fatter, but still handsome, and gaily bedizened.

"Let these widows into the ranks—but none other," he said, passing hastily. "They surely have some right to see the spectacle."

"And surely so have I, for I predicted it last year in my almanac; all of ye remember the figures in my eclipse?" said Lilly, who was near; but the officers took no notice of him, and passed on.

In the inner square of St. James's they found Cromwell's picked troops drawn up and awaiting them.

The commander at the palace examined their warrant, and immediately signified that he resigned the custody of the king's person to them. To baffle any suspicion, and fearing that his agitation might overcome him, Ingulph sent Hacker to announce their arrival. But he gave him the fatal ring which Stonehenge had bestowed upon him, with orders to de-

liver it to the king from a faithful person who desired to present his majesty with a last mark of duty and attachment.

Hoping that the king would perceive a meaning in this message which he did not dare otherwise to communicate, Ingulph and his attendants remained in the court-yard.

After a short pause the condemned monarch appeared. He was dressed with even more than his usual care, and wore the broad blue riband of the garter, and that ornament itself on his knee, elaborately wrought in diamonds. His countenance was sorrowful, but perfectly composed, and with its habitual expression of hauteur. The venerable Juxon, in full pontificals, Bible in hand, walked beside him, and the faithful Herbert followed totteringly, seeming to be lost in grief.

Charles's eye seemed to seek out Ingulph, and a slight flush visited his pale features when he recognised him. Ingulph, who felt that his presence ought to be an assurance of some good intended, stepped forward with a face whose eager expression did all but utter his thoughts. But the king shook his head, and smiled with exceeding mournfulness. Nevertheless he bade the officers cheerfully good morrow. With some vague hope to give the king an idea of what was to happen, Ingulph hastened towards him, and dropped on one knee to show the warrant. Charles bent over him, as if to read it, and whispered in a tone inaudible to all but the person addressed. "Be firm—I know all your plot

—but so does Cromwell! It is foiled, Stonehenge has betrayed all: speak to Herbert, he will explain!"

Observing, then, that he continued to kneel as if rooted to the ground, the king turned to Herbert, and desired him to bring his silver clock with him, and moved on with Juxon, between Hacker and Axtel.

How he came there, Ingulph scarcely knew, but he found himself walking after the partizans that guarded the king, and arm-in-arm with Herbert, over the park.

Herbert spoke to him securely, for it was impossible to hear any but the closest discourse; the moment the gleam of partizans was discerned, the uproar of drums, trumpets, and confused exclamation of the vast multitude made a noise resembling the sea and shrouds in a storm.

The terrible truth was soon made known to Ingulph. Stonehenge had merely feigned to join in his plot to hinder him from forming any other, the success of which he might not be able to prevent. He had informed Cromwell of all, and measures were adopted to foil the whole conspiracy. But, out of humanity both to Dethewarre and the king, the plot and its failure had been communicated to the latter, with information that if Ingulph abstained from any farther demonstration this attempt should not be inquired into. During Ingulph's absence at St. James's, under pretext of some alarm in the city, his regiment was removed from the guard around the scaffold, and dispatched thither. From these

circumstances, the king was convinced of his innocence of all knowledge of the detention of De la Pole, and ascribed it to Stonehenge's mad malice, or Cromwell's duplicity.

Meanwhile the procession advanced, and so lost in dreamy horror was Ingulph, that he did not notice that, instead of entering at the great entrance to Whitehall, they crossed a little garden which led to Holbein's tower. Its highest roofs and the windows were black with gazers.

Ingulph's first distinct recollection was hearing the monarch say, as he entered his palace for the last time, "they promised to bring me home to Whitehall, a glorious king—and here I am!"

"And a glorious king, sire, you are," replied Juxon, mournfully, "leaving a crown on earth to assume a more glorious and everlasting one in heaven."

"Master Prynne, 'tis well you have lost your ears, or the noise would stun ye!" said a ragged cavalier soldier to a person who stood near him.

"I did not think to need them on such a day as this, when I lost them!" replied Prynne. "And would I had rather lost my head at the time than lived to see a violated covenant with God himself!"

"Let us hope, neighbour, let us hope!" said Bulstocke, pushing through the crowd, closely attended by a swarm of his stalwart armourers. "Come, my lads, let us get nearer, and have a finger in the pie, whether 'tis served hot or cold."

Charles and his attendants had now entered the palace, by the gateway under the tower, and Ingulph

comprehended how utterly all was lost when he found himself following the dense guard around the king into the picture-gallery, which he had left so snugly barred. Now it was filled with Harrison's soldiers!

Charles paused repeatedly in passing down the gallery, to look at some favourite picture, and sighed once or twice audibly as he passed through the scenes of his former magnificence. But his firmness never for a moment deserted him, though he glanced occasionally with compassion and tenderness at Ingulph's lost expression of horror.

The grand staircase was densely occupied by soldiers; and on reaching the base, a select band, with drawn swords, consisting of the officers of Cromwell's regiment, awaited to accompany the monarch to his apartment. At this point Juxon fell back a little, and, in a whisper, informed Ingulph that the king dreaded to speak with him would disturb him too much, now that it was necessary for him to fix his thoughts altogether on eternity; but he desired to see and embrace him on his way to the scaffold.

Ingulph was tongue-tied, but he nodded vacantly assent; and yet, when the king turned to the right towards his apartments, he wildly darted to the closed door on the left. He threw it open—a detachment of Ireton's regiment occupied it. Amidst these he beheld two persons whom he could not doubt were the executioner and his assistant. Both wore masks, but the chief had a long grizzled beard, and

seemed to be leaning in meditation on the large glittering axe which he was to wield.

It was the voice of Stonehenge which spoke to him from that mask, inquiring in a calm, perfectly rational, and composed manner, if his majesty had arrived.

Ingulph had almost forgotten his own purpose and meaning; but the sound of the voice recalled both. He replied with seemingly perfect composure in the affirmative, and inquired of one of the officers, where he might find the lord-general with the tidings. The officer immediately replied that he had returned to his own apartments in the palace.

It was at least a quarter of an hour's journey to the lord-general's quarters; but Ingulph had his resources. He hastened to the scaffold—found fault with some of the arrangements—and directed workmen to be sent for to alter them. He then quietly observed to Axtel that the execution must be delayed for a short time, and desired him to send to offer the king refreshments. This he thought would be a hint to delay as much as possible; and he hastened on to the lord-general's lodgings.

Almost the first person he encountered was Lady Fairfax, rushing distractedly to the head of the staircase, as soon as she heard his voice.

"All is lost!" she exclaimed. "It is not an hour since Lady De la Pole was seized, and removed a prisoner—no man knows whither!"

"It is nothing!—where is the general?" exclaimed Dethewarre, madly.

"He is in the great gallery—he promised me to be there after the king had arrived!"

"Villains!—and they have sent me here!" exclaimed Ingulph, darting away, and in less time than it seemed possible, he had returned to the palace.

Traversing the intermediate space with the speed of lightning, Ingulph was rushing through the banqueting hall when some one plucked him by the cloak, and Peters appeared.

"Why, how is this, master colonel?—Deem you that 'tis some suckling lamb about to be offered?" he said. "There ought to be staples in the scaffold, to bind him down if he resists; and there are none!"

"Staples!—truly, I had forgotten it; 'tis a point of great importance," said Ingulph. "Send for the joiners again—I will direct them. But be in no hurry!—I shall return in an instant!"

And he rushed on.

But the lord-general was not in the gallery! He inquired with such distraction for him, that the soldiers imagined something had gone wrong, and he was obliged to answer a torrent of questions, ere he learned that Fairfax was in the oriel chamber, near the banqueting hall.

The thought struck him that there was a formed contrivance to baffle him, but he hurried back, and gave directions to Axtel not to proceed until he himself brought the lord-general's command. Crossing the hall, he met a lugubrious company, all in deep mourning, bearing a leaden coffin; and he calmly desired them to set it down, so that the king

might not perceive it on his arrival. Then, hastening on, he came to the oriel chamber, entered it with no ceremony—and there indeed he found the lord-general, but with him also Cromwell and Harrison.

"What news!—where is the king? Is he arrived?" exclaimed Fairfax, starting up with a look which seemed to expect far different tidings from those which Ingulph brought.

"The king is arrived!—the king is in murtherous clutches!" he replied.

"Methought from his amazed manner—the king had escaped!" said Cromwell, with a troubled smile.

"My lord, is not this your commission?—Did you not appoint me to command the king's guard?" exclaimed Ingulph.

"My commission!—truly, yes, it is mine,—what of that?—You have not dared to let the king escape?" exclaimed Fairfax, exceedingly agitated.

"Then vindicate your authority, which is usurped by officers inferior not only to you, my lord, but to me," said Ingulph; "Axtel has dared to remove my troops, and to put others in their stead, and utterly to change my arrangements, so that it were dangerous to attempt executing the sentence to-day."

"Has Axtel—Axtel!—dared to do this?" said Fairfax, with sudden firmness. "I will know by whose authority; some one bring him hither, and meanwhile the execution must be delayed! Heaven knows what plots may be trammelling!"

"We are not hurried—there is air enough for

us all to breathe," said Cromwell, sedately. "Axtel is not to blame; all that is done was done at my command."

Fairfax glanced at his formidable lieutenant with mingled fear and surprise.

"We will have him before your excellency, to certify what I am saying," continued Cromwell, opening the door and speaking to a sentinel. "Go and tell Axtel to hasten hither,—my lord would see him." And he returned into the chamber, closed the door, and leaned with folded arms against it.

"What ails you, Master Cromwell?—I would know!" said Fairfax, with evident anxiety.

"The Lord knows, we are all of us victims of calumny, and how our whitest and most innocent acts are blackened!" said Cromwell, after a short pause. "He—only—knows whether it is true or false, calumny or verity, an enemy's lie or a friendly truth, but these are not times when the shadow of danger may be disregarded, as if the substance were afar off. But this it was assured to me, and your excellency will forgive if your own honourable family be named in this monstrous plot and conspiracy, to which we had nigh all of us fallen victims!"

Fairfax grew pale, and Cromwell proceeded, with the infinite tautology and circumlocution for which he was renowned when he wished to hide or delay his meaning, to relate the whole circumstances of the plot, which he said were revealed to him by the gold-merchant, Stonehenge.

Ingulph listened with a disdainful smile; but he was not dissatisfied with the delay which so long a

narrative entailed, for any moment might produce a favourable chance. He even availed himself of the doubt which Cromwell laboured to throw over his own story, from an evident desire to allow him a loophole of evasion.

"Stonehenge is a frantic madman!" he exclaimed. "Was it right or justice to condemn me unheard, on a madman's accusation?"

At this moment a strange doleful murmur and trampling of numerous feet was heard in the hall below.

"Stonehenge is a madman—we all know it!" said Fairfax eagerly. "No man will believe such a tale! The army—as if my own wife!—deem you I keep no better order in my house than to let women mingle in such high matters? Colonel Dethewarre, I restore you to your office!—go and see it—see all that is due performed."

"My lord, no!—it is true, there is such a plot!—it will be at imminent peril of a bloody massacre if you adventure to put this merciless decree in force to day!" exclaimed Ingulph, frantically. "I do confess it—stop the execution, or a direful slaughter must ensue!"

"What is the meaning of this?—You confess it?" said Fairfax, staring amazedly. "Why, why—Master Cromwell, I say—if this plot,—I say, if there is a conspiracy—the streets running in blood—the grand delinquent—his majesty—is it fitting that so much innocent blood should be shed to shed one criminal's?"

"Let us seek the Lord!" exclaimed Harrison, ec-

statically; "He alone can enlighten us; and never did I feel my soul so full of prayer as now; let us seek the Lord!"

"My lord-general, 'tis for you to prevent this piteous massacre, or to go down to your grave burdened with all the blood of it!" cried Ingulph, distractedly. "Oh, if there be one drop of noble blood in your veins, save the king! if one spark of religion, keep the covenant! If you be a man—if you be a gentleman—you have sworn it, you have sworn it!"

"The king remembered your nobility but little that day he spurned you on the heath near York, kneeling to him though you were in the dust," said Cromwell, as the general turned imploringly to him. "The man cared less for your humanity when he devoted your father's head and your own to all the penalties of treason!"

There was a pause, during which a confused murmur, very remote, was audible, which instantly died away.

"Babylon submits! — all is well!" exclaimed Harrison, in a delirium of enthusiasm. "Now let them sing the song; now let the angel of the sun shout aloud; the vials of the wrath of God are empty; the scarlet woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, is fallen; the kingdom is redeemed from the beast; let the great voice rend the heavens again, saying: It is done!—Now, O Lord, now let the new Jerusalem descend from heaven on the earth! Let the walls of jasper, and sapphire, and chalcedony, and emerald, and sardonyx, and sardius, and chry-

solite, and beryl, and topaz, and chrysoprasus, and jacinct, and amethyst, blaze out, and the glory of the Lord extinguish the sun, and there be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain; for the former things are past away; and I hear the voice shouting—Behold, I make all things new!"

Harrison flung himself on his knees, clasping the hands of Fairfax in an ecstasy of enthusiasm; and Fairfax, as the readiest means of escaping from his perplexity, knelt too. At the same moment Cromwell's visage seemed to lighten over with delirious excitement, and throwing himself down beside them, he exclaimed—"Yea, yea, let the lightnings be visible on Sinai, since they will not believe without it. Lord, is it thy will that this whole nation perish, or but one man?"

As he spoke the door flew open, and Axtel rushed abruptly in.

"All is well!" he exclaimed. "He is on the scaffold, and not a breath is heard against it!"

"Our prayer is answered!" exclaimed Cromwell, leaping up.

"They cannot, they dare not, they shall not!" shouted Ingulph desperately; but as he rushed forward, Axtel, Harrison, and the sentinels at the door darted against him, and seized him in an overpowering grasp. After a vain but furious struggle of some moments, he suddenly yielded.

"I submit—all is lost; but let me see him ere he dies—let me but obtain his forgiveness or my soul is

lost for ever!" he exclaimed distractedly, turning to Cromwell, who gazed at him for a moment in silence.

"Swear to me that you will attempt no disturbance!—for I tell you, the guard around the scaffold have orders to sweep it with their musketry on the least symptom of resistance—and Ireton commands!" said he.

"I swear—I swear!" repeated the agonized victim.

"Give me your pistols." He surrendered them.

"Cock yours, Axtel!—your sword!" He unsheathed and threw it away.

"Now, Axtel, walk beside him! On the least return of this madness, use your pistol," said the lieutenant, sternly. "And now go! For me, I will seek the Lord's will only in prayer." And covering his face with his hands, he resumed his kneeling posture, while Ingulph, closely guarded by Axtel, left the chamber—or rather burst out of it.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### AN EXECUTION—OR—A MARTYRDOM?

Aware that all farther resistance was sheer madness, in the serenity of utter despair, Ingulph hastened to the Banqueting Hall. All the windows were stemmed with gazers, many of them women in vizards; it was crowded with soldiers, whose partizans kept a clear way to the fatal window. Ingulph even afterwards remembered that he looked vacantly up and noticed the ceiling glowing with all the splendours of the pencil of Rubens, and representing the apotheosis of James I.

But the tragedy was not yet consummated—the coffin was still there untenanted. Ingulph hurried on; he reached the scaffold, and stood for a moment in a state of dreamy stupefaction.

The king was on the point of concluding the long and calm harangue with which he vindicated his conduct on the scaffold, appealing thence to posterity.

"I have delivered my conscience," he said. "I pray God that you do take those courses that are best for the good of the kingdom, and your own salvation."

Juxon then spoke. "Though it be very well known what your majesty's affections are to the protestant religion," he said, "yet it may be expected that you should say something for the world's satisfaction in that particular?"

"I thank you very heartily, my lord, for that; I had almost forgotten it," replied Charles, with a slight smile; and turning to the people, he said, in a raised voice. "In troth, sirs, my conscience in religion I think is very well known to all the world; and therefore I declare before you all, that I die a Christian according to the profession of the Church of England, as I found it left me by my father; and this honest man I think will witness it."

He turned again to the officers in attendance, and his eye fell on Ingulph with an expression of extreme pity and surprise.

"Sirs, excuse me for this same, I have a good cause, and I have a gracious God; I will say no more," he continued, to Hacker. "Take care they do not put me to pain. And, sir," beckoning to Ingulph, "this, an' it please you."

He advanced like a statue in motion, until he was close beside the block.

"Take heed of the axe—it may hurt you!" he said kindly. "I owe this gentleman many kindnesses; I must bid him farewell." He then added in a whisper, inaudible to all but Ingulph—"Farewell, *my son!* I know all your efforts in my behalf—I acquit you of all share in my destruction. Keep this ring for my sake and your own, I have sufficiently recommended the bearer to all who love

me." And he restored Stonehenge's ring to Ingulph, who knelt bareheaded, and could only ejaculate—

"Mercy!—forgive your murderer, father!"

"Not so, not so; but promise me never again to serve him that truly is—Cromwell!" returned the unfortunate monarch, in a low tone. But observing that Ingulph was speechless, he stooped, embraced him warmly, and with a gesture recommended him to the care of Axtel, while he himself returned calmly to the executioner.

"I shall say but very short prayers, and when I thrust out my hands . . "

The masked executioner nodded, with a deep sigh.

The bishop now handed the king a white satin nightcap; but feeling his long grey hair, he inquired of the executioner if it would be in his way. The man made no reply, but laid down his axe, and assisted the bishop in adjusting it under the cap.

"I have a good cause, and a gracious God on my side!" he said to Juxon smilingly, when this fearful preparation was completed.

"There is but one stage more," replied Juxon; "which, though turbulent and troublesome, yet it is a very short one; you may consider it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven; and there you will find, to your great joy, the prize you hasten to—a crown of glory!"

"I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be, no disturb-

ance in the world," said Charles, mournfully, as if retracing in his mind the turbulent events of his career.

"You are exchanged from a temporal to an eternal crown. A good exchange!" replied the bishop.

"Is my hair well?" said Charles, turning to the executioner. He nodded.

Taking off his collar and insignia of the Garter, the king then handed it to Juxon, saying the remarkable and ominous word which has ever since puzzled posterity—

"Remember!"

Charles glanced at the block, and the loose staples.

"You must set it fast," he observed.

"It is fast, sir," replied the executioner. Charles looked at him for a moment, but the impenetrable mask baffled his scrutiny.

"Knight of De la Pole!" he then said in a low tone, "it might have been a little higher!"

"It can be no higher, sir!" said the assistant executioner, observing that his master made no reply.

By this time, Axtel, surprised at Dethewarre's making no effort to rise from his kneeling position, shook him violently; and startled him from a kind of insensibility rather of mind than body. He arose —and mechanically obeying the gestures of Axtel— followed him off the scaffold. But as they entered the Banqueting Hall, a low deep universal sigh was heard gradually rising among the mob—he glanced

back—an axe arose gleaming in a wintry sunbeam, which shone out for an instant—and fell—with the same vast and universal sigh accompanying its fall. The object of so many loves and hates—a moment before instinct with wrongs, and woes, and passions, evil and good, lay there, senseless, thoughtless, silent, bleeding, dead!

Ingulph staggered on, still guided by Axtel—he knew not whither—and almost simultaneously with the descent of the blow, the multitude were dispersed in every direction by a sudden and masterly movement of the encompassing troops.

Axtel hurried him on, apparently with some purpose, but he himself had none. They entered the great gallery, and the first person whom they met—at least whom Ingulph recognised—was Lord Fairfax.

"How is the king?—where is he?" exclaimed the lord general, in a voice full of horror.

"He is murdered!" replied Ingulph, calmly; and Fairfax hurried out of the chamber.

Axtel now hastened with his prisoner, as he might be called, to the opposite end of the gallery, and there was Cromwell, alone, pacing up and down, but outwardly very calm.

"Dethewarre!" exclaimed he, as the young man approached; but no reply was made.

"Master Dethewarre!" he continued, in a moved tone, "I will be plain with you; I have suffered you to do all that could clear your conscience of this man's death; but he is gone. Therefore it behoves you now cheerfully to resolve to share your

country's glorious fate with us—or to relinquish it for ever!"

"Are you absolute sultan in England in place of the slaughtered king?" shouted Ingulph, with wild defiance.

"Lady De la Pole is in the conspiracy—would you bring her too to the block?" said Cromwell. "She is now in Montacute's vessel—all of you quit England together, or none."

"And Lord De la Pole?" gasped Ingulph.

"Again, I tell you, I know nothing of him; but if so plotting a head comes within my grasp!"—said Cromwell; but suddenly breaking off he continued—"A short exile will soften all your prejudices—your wounds are too green now. Whenever your ancient patriotism returns—whenever you feel inclined to assist me in making this land of England the greatest on the face of the earth—return."

The lieutenant then folding his arms with a slight sigh, gave a signal to Axtel, who followed by a guard of partizans, was about to hasten away with his prisoner, who, after an instant's hesitation, submitted. But as he turned to follow his conductors, Bulstocke and the water-poet suddenly appeared pushing a way up to the lieutenant.

Their business was soon explained. Taylor had discovered a letter in the clothes left by De la Pole behind him on his disappearance, which proved to be an invitation from the wife of Stonehenge to the unfortunate nobleman to visit her once more—to take an eternal farewell in the old tower. Her husband, she assured him, was absent, and would

not return until long after their meeting could be over. There was little doubt that De la Pole had accepted the invitation, partly from a lingering feeling of attachment, and partly because he wished to secure a place of concealment for the king. There was consequently almost assurance that he had been murdered, or was unlawfully detained there.

The Marquis of Montacute, who had been seized and was detained a prisoner at the old palace, which was found completely desolate, now sent to demand the interference of the lieutenant, for the tower was found so securely locked and barricaded that it was impossible to enter it.

"Master Bulstocke is a magistrate—go and aid with your military, Axtel," replied the lieutenant, much disturbed by this intelligence. "I trust it will turn out that your suspicions are ill-grounded."

The recollection that if De la Pole was Stonehenge's prisoner—that he was about to return to his dwelling with the yet reeking axe in his hand, occurred to Ingulph, and roused him effectually from his stupor. He mentioned the access to the tower by the ruins; but Axtel replied that Master Stonehenge had busied himself the whole of the previous night in destroying all communication.

At the lieutenant's suggestion, or rather command, Axtel now hurried away with his prisoner, Bulstocke, Taylor, and a file of soldiers to the old palace, by way of the gardens. They met the marquis in a state of frenzied despair, hurrying along with his capturers to the same point.

Ingulph led the way, as one best acquainted with

it; and after some fruitless efforts to obtain an entrance peacefully, the gates of the old tower were forced open by the soldiery. They rushed up the stairs with hearts thickly beating and in silence.

It was drawing to night, and as they passed the cross-bow slits in the walls, the dreary winter sun might be seen setting over the melancholy waves of the river, with a dun and sanguinary glow suiting the close of such a day. Ascending the stairs, the sudden gleam of a torch on their faces made all start back, and not without reason, for Stonehenge appeared, still in the garb he had worn at the execution, still with the bloody axe in his hand, and followed by the mulatto.

"Who, who is this?" exclaimed Montacute, aghast.

"My name is—Vengeance!" replied the madman, with an air of supernatural dignity. "From the beginning of time I was commissioned to my task; it is over now—and eternal rest is my reward! —Be not afraid!—This is a king's blood; none meaner shall stain it. I have slaughtered the friend of my youth—the son of mine enemy I have not—touched." And he laughed till all the chambers of the lofty tower re-echoed.

"Monster!—and a monstrous deed have you done!" said Montacute. "Know this to thy perdition, 'twas I that deceived ye both—deceived thy sister in that fatal marriage which drove her to despair—but the friend of thy youth was wholly innocent!"

Stonehenge gazed at him for an instant with evident flashes of sanity lighting up his benighted intellect. The axe fell from his hand.

"Ashtaroth! liar! thou hast deceived me!" he yelled aloud. "Power of evil, where is my rest? Well, let the sacrifice be completed; seek your son, Montacute, he is a prisoner above."

He threw a bunch of keys, as he spoke, to the marquis, and as they hastened past him he bowed courteously to each with a distracted smile, which seemed as if reason was at last utterly extinguished.

The explorers hastened on; they reached the laboratory. In the madness of his hurry Montacute broke the key in the door. He shouted his son's name—a deep prolonged silence answered, and then they all applied their strength together, and the door was forced open with such violence that it fell down all of a piece.

They rushed in—and what a sight was there! Seated in the iron chair in which Ingulph had formerly been secured, was the corpse of De la Pole—the handsome, the witty, the daring, the licentious De la Pole—a corpse! There was no wound upon him, nor other mark of violence; it seemed that he had perished of famine; and close beside him—as if she had sunk down in death from a last embrace—lay the dead, but still beautiful, form of Ramona!

While Montacute shrieked aloud, and the rest stood gazing in mute horror, a dense volume of smoke suddenly filled the chamber, and the mulatto burst wildly in, distractedly exclaiming that Stone-

henge had set the building on fire—that he had driven him upstairs to perish with them in the flames.

Axtel and his soldiers ran out pell-mell; only Ingulph and Montacute remained, the latter distractedly endeavouring to remove his son's body from the fatal chair. Bright tongues of flame darted in at the door, and Stonehenge appeared approaching amidst the flames, and flourishing his bright axe. Not a moment was to be lost. Remembering the exit by means of the ruins, Ingulph tore the marquis away with him, and rushed thither, passing Stonehenge. But he offered no obstruction, uttering a loud frantic laugh, for he probably imagined he had destroyed all means of escape in that direction; but a body of soldiers with ladders had been dispatched by the lieutenant to obtain an entry in that way, if the attempt on the opposite failed. Ingulph and the marquis were rescued at imminent peril from a narrow fragment of masonry, and but just in time, for although the massive stonework of the walls resisted the flames, within they raged fiercely as a furnace among the ancient chambers, which were chiefly of wood.

Assistance now thronged in on all sides, but it was found impossible to extinguish the flames until the interior of the tower was utterly consumed, the walls and roof being only blackened by their action. No trace of Stonehenge, nor of either of his unhappy victims, excepting the axe with which he was last seen, was ever discovered. No information beyond the conjectures of the survivors ever explained the

dismal catastrophe, for whether the mulatto perished or not in the flames, the most diligent exertions never ascertained what had become of him. In the printed accounts of the day the conflagration was ascribed to the malice of the cavaliers, who desired to involve their sovereign's palace in his destruction. No mention is made of the living and the dead who found a sepulchre together in the fierce element, probably to conceal a black tragedy the divulging of which at the time would have done little good, and would have inflicted superfluous anguish on the survivors of the enormous vengeance of the Knight of De la Pole.

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To the original MS. there is a note added in a different hand, and dated somewhere about the commencement of the 18th century, which containing all the information relating to the actors in this chronicle whose fates are not recorded by history, which we have been enabled to gather, we have briefly extracted. The writer professes to be a Catholic priest, chaplain in the family of the Earl De la Pole, son of the Ingulph Dethewarre of the narrative, and of the widow of the son of the most noble the Lord Marquis of Montacute, who so unhappily perished by a dolorous accident on the day when his most royal and sacred master was decapitated.

It appeared that when abroad (for he never returned to England until that blessed event of the

restoration of his late most excellent Majesty, King Charles the Second) the young exile was restored to the forfeited honours of his grandfather, Earl De la Pole, and resided on the estates in France left him by the Marquis of Montacute, on his decease in 1652, with the condition only that he should wed the widow of his unfortunate son. Both the earl and his countess, during their long residence abroad, were reconciled to the holy apostolic Catholic faith, and professed it with unabated perseverance during all the subsequent annoyance and persecution suffered by those who professed the ancient religion in England. It is believed that the earl, shortly after the death of his wife, and the revolution of 1688, overwhelmed with disgust of the world, and tormented by the too nice scruples of his conscience, retired to a monastery of Carthusian monks, resigning all his riches and honours to his only son and heir, "my present most honourable lord and patron," says the annotator.

Of the Bulstocke family, all that is authentically known is, that on learning the king's destruction, and the consequent utter breaking of the covenant, Tribulation was so strongly affected that she died within a few minutes after the information had reached her; whence the learned Salmasius takes occasion—but the learned Salmasius's book is extant.

THE END.

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